

Hafa Adai!

NMC's marketing strategies gain national recognition. **PAGE 2**

Judiciary, DPS to transition to eCitation system in January 2024. **PAGE 3**



\$1

# Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 251

www.saipantribune.com

TUESDAY DECEMBER 19, 2023

www.facebook.com/saipantribune



KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

Former governor Ralph DLG Torres leaves Superior Court judge pro tem Arthur Barcinas' courtroom following his hearing yesterday.

## Magofna pushes for 10-25% discounts for senior citizens

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Sen. Corina L. Magofna (Ind-Saipan) has introduced a resolution to encourage all CNMI businesses—grocery stores, retail outlets, home improvement stores, and restaurants, among others—to offer se-



Magofna

nior citizen discounts ranging between 10% and 25%.

Magofna stated in the resolution that many senior citizens—people ages 55 years or older—are unemployed or have reached retirement age.

Many senior citizens—collectively known as the

See **MAGOFNA** on Page 4

## Torres: We don't even know why we're here

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**  
kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Superior Court has granted the CNMI government leave to file a new penal summons against former governor Ralph DLG Torres in the

new contempt case filed against him by assistant attorney general James Kingman.

This comes soon after Torres' lawyer, Joaquin "Jack" Torres, complained that the penal summons issued against his client was im-

properly served. Judge pro tem Arthur Barcinas, who yesterday presided over multiple hearings at the  
See **TORRES** on Page 4



### CBP VISIT

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios yesterday met with senior leaders of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, which is part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The CBP delegation was led by Pete Flores, who is the acting deputy commissioner for U.S. Customs and Border Protection. As the agency's senior career official, Flores oversees the daily operations of CBP's expansive mission, including matters relating to trade, travel, and national security. Flores was accompanied by David Salazar, director of Field Operations, USCBP San Francisco; George Minamishin, Area Port director, USCBP Honolulu; Jeffrey M. Hofschneider Jr., Port director at the Francisco C. Ada Saipan International Airport; Ferdinand Mallari, USCBP officer, and Stevie Sauer, adjutant to the acting deputy commissioner of USCBP. During their meeting, the governor and the CBP leaders discussed a number of issues including the implementation of facial biometrics technology at the airport and other matters that can enhance visitor arrivals into the CNMI.

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

## Public hearings will check if CNMI public is OK with internet gaming



Yumul

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Rep. Ralph N. Yumul (Ind-Saipan) has introduced a bill that will allow internet gaming in the CNMI and the House of Representatives' Gaming Committee, which he chairs, will be  
See **HEARINGS** on Page 4

## Sagana sentenced to 24 months' imprisonment

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**  
kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Bonifacio "Boni" V. Sagana, who had been unanimously found guilty of conspiring with Bernadita Zata to illegal-

ly produce a CNMI driver's license, was sentenced to 24 months in prison yesterday.

Following an over three-hour long sentencing hearing, District Court for the  
See **SAGANA** on Page 4

## INSIDE



### LOCAL

December 2023 was recently proclaimed as "CNMI Drunk, Drugged, Drowsy and Distracted (4D) Driving Prevention Month."

**PAGE 7**



### BUSINESS

Two best friends originally from Southern Indiana and co-teachers at Saipan Community School have opened a thrift shop in San Vicente called Will & Ebs' Tropic Thrift.

**PAGE 11**



### WORLD

A gloomy mood hangs over Ukraine's soldiers nearly two years after Russia invaded their country.

**PAGE 13**



SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.



**GOT A NEWS TIP?**

TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

## Local

## NMC's marketing strategies gain national recognition

By CHRYSTAL MARINO

chrystal\_marino@saipantribune.com  
CORRESPONDENT

The Northern Marianas College, led by the NMC Office of Institutional Advancement and NMC Cooperative Research Extension and Education Services, recently gained national recognition after obtaining three Medallion awards from the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations.

According to an NMC news release last Saturday, NMC's Office of Institutional Advancement, which is responsible for overseeing college marketing and communication, received two gold Medallions from the NCMPR, one for their video documentary on NMC's journey since the catastrophic Super Typhoon Yutu, and the other for their social media advertisement promoting NMC's spring 2023 semester.

In addition to the two gold Medallions, the media team at NMC-CREES also secured a bronze Medallion for a social media advertisement



Pictured from left, standing, are interim director for Institutional Advancement Raynard Travilla, NMC Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Services media intern Roxzanna Pangelinan, and Communications manager Miguel Dandan. Seated from left are NMC Database administrator and lead graphic designer Renedel Buno, NMC-CREES media specialist Michaela Gatdula, and digital media specialist Casey Huliganga.

earlier this year.

Robyn Martyn, who is the NCMPR Medallion Awards coordinator and assistant dean of Enrollment and Marketing

at Cochise College in Arizona, said she was very impressed with the NMC's submissions. "I personally enjoyed watching [the video documenting

the college's journey after Super Typhoon Yutu]," Martyn said. "It was a great way to show [the college's] resiliency after such a tragedy."

The NCMPR Medallion Awards, which recognize excellence in design and communication, specifically spotlight the achievements of community and technical colleges across NCMPR's seven districts. NMC operates under District 6, encompassing a region that includes Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Utah, the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, the Marshall Islands, the CNMI, and Guam.

Notably, this regional competition is exclusive to marketing and public relations professionals at two-year colleges. To date, NMC has amassed a total of 16 Medallion awards from NCMPR, consisting of seven gold awards, four silver awards, and four bronze awards.

NMC president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero congratulates the team. "I am extremely proud of the amazing marketing team at OIA and CREES and would like to congratulate them on this achievement," he said. "This is an extremely remarkable feat, as our team competes

with other colleges and universities with significantly more resources than us."

Frankie Eliptico, who is vice president of NMC Administration and Advancement, leads the college's marketing team, which includes Raynard Travilla (interim director for Institutional Advancement), Miguel Dandan (communications manager), Renedel Buno (database administrator and lead graphic designer), Casey Huliganga (digital media specialist), Michaela Gatdula (NMC-CREES media specialist), and media interns Camille Hocog, Richard Baleares, Christian Troy Rosimo, Roxzanna Pangelinan, and Patricia Pak.

The mission of OIA is to implement a strategic and integral communications effort that is committed to helping NMC as the premier provider of higher education and training opportunities in the Pacific.

To learn more about NCMPR, and their awards check out their website at <https://www.ncmpr.org/about-ncmpr>.



Atkins Kroll (Saipan), Inc.  
#1 Chalan Msr Guerrero San Jose  
Saipan, MP 96950

**3 YEARS OF  
FREE SERVICE**  
with any Toyota or Lexus model



**SHOP ONLINE**

Scan to **view inventory**,  
get **pre-approved** and  
see **payment options**.

Contact us at:  
**(670) 234-5911**

# Judiciary, DPS to transition to eCitation system in January 2024

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The House of Representatives has approved the CNMI Judiciary's proposed rules governing traffic procedure and other infractions that are intended to transition from a paper-based citation system to an electronic citation system starting January 2024.

All 17 House members present last Thursday adopted the House Judiciary and Gov-

ernmental Operations Committee's recommendation to approve the proposed rules.

The JGO Committee, chaired by Rep. Marissa Renee Flores (Ind-Saipan), said the eCitation system offers numerous benefits that are advantageous to law enforcement authorities. Such benefits include faster processing, since handwritten citations take longer; legibility, thereby eliminating errors and reducing dismissals; and operation-

al efficiency, since citations can be sent immediately from the police vehicle to the courthouse.

Other benefits include increased safety for officers, since they would be off the shoulder of the road faster; increased community control, as officers would spend less time on the side of the road and more time patrolling the community; and budget savings,

with law enforcement authorities spending less on paper and other costs associated with paper-based citations.

With the technological advancements occurring in today's day and age, it would be appropriate to acclimate the people according to the times while still working to achieve objectives, the committee said. These changes are necessary

for modernization and expedition purposes.

CNMI Supreme Court Chief Justice Alexandro C. Castro submitted the proposed rules to the Legislature last Nov. 2.

The proposed rules will become effective 60 days after submission, unless disapproved by a majority of the members of either House or Senate.

Castro had explained that eCitation is a platform that will allow law enforcement to generate citations and transmit information elec-

tronically to online court management system.

In preparation for this new technology, the Supreme Court Rules Committee made many revisions to current rules governing traffic procedure, aiming to streamline and modernize the issuance and filing of traffic citations through electronic means.

Castro said the proposed rules also formalize the inclusion of other non-traffic payable violations, such as citations for violations of the Litter Control Act, in the Superior Court's traffic docket.


## Dilse earns dean's list honor at Lee University

**CLEVELAND, Tennessee**—Lee University congratulates Karina Dilse of Saipan on earning dean's list honors during the fall 2023 semester.


Dean's list recognition is earned by full-time, undergraduate students with a semester grade point average between 3.7 and 4.00.

Lee University is a private, Christ-centered university located in Cleveland, Tennessee, in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. The

university's reputation as a quality institution is seen in the high caliber of faculty, students, and friends who are drawn to campus. Over the past three decades, Lee has experienced remarkable transformations including significant growth in academic programs, athletics, institutional facilities, student enrollment, and faculty expertise and diversity. For more information, visit [www.leeuniversity.edu](http://www.leeuniversity.edu). (PR)



**NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION**  
P.O. BOX 500514444, Saipan, MP 96950-0514  
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: www.nmhc.gov.mp



---

**PUBLIC DISCLOSURE**

NMHC hereby publicly discloses that on December 14, 2023, Michael SN and Evelyn R. Camacho, an immediate family member of Brandy R. Camacho of NMHC, applied for assistance under the HOME Program.


Said applicant has been determined to be a member of a group or class of low-income persons intended to be beneficiaries of the assisted activity and is applying to receive generally the same benefits being made available to the group or class. Ms. Brandy R. Camacho is not and shall not be involved in the handling of this loan application.

NMHC discloses this possible conflict pursuant to 24 CFR 92.356 in order to allow any interested persons to comment before the application is considered for an exception under the applicable HOME Program conflict regulations. Any comments should be submitted to NMHC on or before January 5, 2024.


Dated this 15th day of December, 2023.

/S/ JESSE S. PALACIOS  
Corporate Director

"NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency"



**Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands  
HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS LICENSING BOARD**  
P.O. Box 502078, Bldg., 1242 Pohnpei Court  
Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950  
Tel No: (670) 664-4809 Fax: (670) 664-4814  
Email: info@cnmilicensing.gov.mp • Website: www.cnmilicensing.gov.mp



---

Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Governor David M. Apatang, through the Health Care Professions Licensing Board (HCPBLB) hereby gives notice that it will hold its regular monthly board meeting on **Wednesday, December 20, 2023, at 8 a.m.** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the Board of Professional Licensing Conference Room, BPL Building on Capitol Hill.

**AGENDA**

- I. Meeting Call to Order
- II. Determination of Quorum
- III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
- IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes (11/22/2023)
- V. Public Comments
- VI. Chairperson's Report
  - Upcoming Vacancy on the Board
- VII. Director's Report
- VIII. Investigator's Report
- IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
  - A. Governor's Office
  - B. Legislature
  - X. Old Business
- XI. New Business
- XII. Pending Applications for Board's Review
  - A. New Application
  - B. Renewal Application
- XIII. Miscellaneous Business
  - Upcoming National Boards Annual Meetings for 2024
  - 2024 FSMB Annual Conference Invitation
  - PsyPact Commission Order
- XIV. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
  - Five applications for discussions
- XV. Announcements
  - A. Next Meeting Date
  - B. Adjournment of Meeting

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

Last day of submission today!

# What I Wish for Christmas

## Drawing Contest

**OPEN TO KIDS AGES 6 TO 12**

**Deadline of Submission:**  
December 19, 2023

**Dimensions:**  
8.5in x 11in to 11in x 17in

**Mediums:**  
Watercolor, Poster Color, Acrylic,  
Crayons & Color Pencils.  
No computer generated artwork allowed.

*Draw what you wish for Christmas and tell us why. Add a short description in your drawing as to what is your Christmas wish and why.*

*Artworks must be original and must be Christmas themed. Winners will get special gifts!*

**please submit entries to**  
**Saipan Tribune**  
JP Center, Beach Road Garapan  
M-F at 8am - 6:00pm.  
For more information, please email  
[sales@saipantribune.com](mailto:sales@saipantribune.com)  
or call (670) 235-2440 and look for Christine.














## \$20K bail imposed on man accused of assault

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**  
kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Superior Court has imposed a \$20,000 cash bail on a man accused of assaulting his partner.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho has imposed a \$20,000 cash bail on Brian Lee, a man accused of assaulting his partner following a heated argument.

Lee, 26, is facing charges of assault and battery, assault, domestic violence, and disturbing the peace.

Following the bail hearing yesterday, Camacho remanded Lee back to Department Corrections custody.

According to court documents, at around 7:29pm on Dec. 16, DPS responded to a female caller who was seeking police assistance as she feared her partner was going to cause trouble.

At the scene, police spoke with a bystander who led police to Lee and his partner

who “needed to be separated” as the woman appeared to be scared.

On Dec. 17, police met with the woman again who told police that on Friday, Dec. 15, Lee dropped her off to a Christmas party and picked her up at around 1:30am.

She noted that as she approached the car, Lee was shouting from the inside.

The woman said on the way to their home, their argument eventually calmed down.

However, when they arrived home, she claims Lee assaulted her before she eventually fell asleep.

The next day, she said on the way to a nearby store, Lee mentioned that he would be going to see his mother because he was not happy with her.

Knowing his tendency to get physical and not wanting him to get into any more trouble, the woman asked someone at the store to call for police.

That same day, Lee was arrested and brought to DOC.



**KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**  
Brian Lee, far right, a man accused of assault, is escorted to Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho's courtroom for his bail hearing yesterday.

## SAGANA

From page 1

NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona sentenced Sagana, 58, to 24 months with credit for time served, followed by a term of three years of supervised release.

Sagana, who had relocated to Wisconsin but was brought back to the CNMI to face federal charges, was allowed to remain under conditional release until he is placed in one of the Federal Bureau of Prisons' facilities.

Sagana's sentence includes 50 hours of community service.

“Accordingly, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3583, the Mandatory Conditions are to be imposed immediately. Defendant must perform 50 hours of communi-

ty service in lieu of a fine and at the direction of the U.S. Probation Office. Defendant shall pay a special assessment fee of \$100 to be paid immediately after sentencing. Court waived the fine,” said Manglona.

According to court documents, the U.S. District Court for the NMI issued an arrest warrant for Sagana following a grand jury indictment back on Jan. 31, on the charge of conspiring with others to unlawfully produce a CNMI driver's license.

However, Sagana left the CNMI before he could be arrested and was only taken into custody last May 16 in Wisconsin.

A longer version of this story is available at [www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com)

## HEARINGS

From page 1

soliciting public comments on the proposal.

He said they will conduct multiple hearings to see if the community will consider another form of gaming, which he described as a revenue generating measure.

Yumul stated in the legislation that the casino industry on Saipan did not come to fruition as expected and the Commonwealth has suffered immeasurable financial economic losses. Despite such unfortunate circumstances and cognizant of the global crises that the community has undergone such as the COVID-19 pandemic and super typhoons Soudelor and Yutu, the bill states that internet gaming, or iGaming, would result in economic benefit to the Commonwealth.

Yumul said internet casinos or iCasinos, otherwise known

as virtual casinos or online casinos, are considered to be web-based internet versions of traditional casinos.

He said iCasinos provide greater advantages than traditional land-based casinos. Such benefits include playing at the player's convenience from the comfort of his or her own device; greater privacy and security; utilizing multiple modes of payments and depositing and withdrawing at ease; larger variety of games that are not found in land-based casino; offering large bonuses that help incentivize and improve gaming experiences; and the lack of foot traffic that will improve the pace of play.

Yumul said the Commonwealth can utilize such advantages and gain significant economic benefits from the global iCasino market.

A longer version of this story is available at [www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com)

## STUDENTS SPREAD HOLIDAY CHEER



**PSS**  
On Friday morning, student-members of Saipan Southern High School's Famaguon Marianas Glee Club and Hopwood Middle School's Glee Club treated Public School System's central office personnel and staff led by interim commissioner of Education Donna M. Flores to a holiday caroling.



**PSS**  
Held at the Office of the Commissioner of Education on Capital Hill, these student-performers and musicians presented various delightful songs and those watching sang along, too. This is a continuing annual tradition for public schools throughout the year of singing Christmas carols to their peers, parents, and school district personnel. This activity also serves as an educational experience for students, teaching them the value of giving back and community involvement.

## MAGOFNA

From page 1

*man'amko*—are living on a fixed income, which is much less than their previous work income. This means, Magofna said, that many senior citizens must budget all their monthly expenses including housing, groceries, household items, medicines, medical supplies,

and other necessities.

Unfortunately, Magofna said, some retired senior citizens are experiencing diminished retirement income because of offsets being applied against their monthly income to recover overpayments due to erroneous calculations made in prior years by the NMI Retirement Fund.

She said this income loss has severely and significantly re-

duced the *man'amko*'s financial ability to maintain a decent living on their fixed income.

The senator said with a depressed economy and inflation driving up consumer prices, it is appropriate that people show compassion and consideration to senior citizens by affording them a purchase discount to help minimize the financial hardships that many of them are

experiencing at this time.

The CNMI Office on Aging already has a Senior Citizen Discount program (<https://cnmioa.org/senior-citizen-discount-card-program/>), with participating businesses offering discounts that range from a low of 5% to as much as 25%, with majority offering 10% to 20% discounts. However, participation in this program is not mandatory for businesses.

## TORRES

From page 1

Guma Hustisia pertaining to the ongoing civil and criminal cases against Ralph DLG Torres, postponed an arraignment hearing for the ex-governor, saying he would not act on the matter due to improper service of the summons.

Jack Torres had expressed concerns that, to his client's knowledge, he was appearing in court in compliance with a penal summons and that his client was unaware that he was summoned to court for an arraignment as he wasn't even provided information along with the penal summons.

“My client received the penal summons on Dec. 7, but we don't know why we're here. We don't have any information. I contacted the officer who served my client but we still don't have the information. We want to know what he is being charged with. It's

been 11 days already and we still don't have that, so we don't know why we're here other than complying with a penal summons. We're here for an arraignment but we don't even know what our client is being arraigned for. The government filed their information on Oct. 27 and the penal summons was not issued until Dec. 7. Where is the due process here?” he asked.

Kingman said he would provide the defense with a copy of the information and possibly proceed with the arraignment. He said a lack of resources resulted in him being unable to provide a hard copy of the information to the defense during the hearing.

To this, Barcinas explained that pursuant to CNMI law, a penal summons must be accompanied with the information.

A longer version of this story is available at [www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com)

The Joint Region Marianas team from Guam recently presented their innovative Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Quality of Life program at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.

The event, coordinated by the Marianas Visitors Authority, Saipan Chamber of Commerce, Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs, and the CNMI Small Business Development Center, provided a platform for local businesses to explore partnership opportunities with JRM to offer products and services to military personnel stationed in Guam.

In an effort to further enrich the program, JRM is actively seeking to expand partnership opportunities to extend its offerings to visiting military personnel interested in exploring Saipan. This strategic expansion aims to enhance the experience of military members and their families, both in Guam and during visits to Saipan, through collaborations with local businesses.

The presentation highlighted the collaborative efforts between JRM and local businesses, emphasizing the positive impact on the well-being of service members and their families. The MWR Quality of Life program serves as a bridge for businesses to connect with military personnel, fostering a mutually benefi-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Joint Region Marianas from Guam recently presented their Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Quality of Life program at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.

cial relationship.

Attendees were also extended an invitation to the upcoming 2024 Quality of Life Expo scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 24, 2024, at the University of Guam Calvo Field House in Mangilao, Guam. This expo is dedicated to cultivating new partnerships, strengthening community relations, and enhancing the lives of service members and their families on the island.

Businesses are encouraged

to participate and showcase offerings related to staycations, outdoor adventures, dining experiences, essential resources, and cultural immersion. The expo provides an opportunity for businesses to shine and reach both local and military communities.

For more information about the 2024 Quality of Life Expo and partnership opportunities, interested parties are encouraged to contact JRMQOLEX-PO@us.navy.mil. (SCC)

**MOBILE CLINIC SCHEDULE**  
for December 2023

**Adult Health Check**

**Dec 1st & 16th**

- Dec. 1 at Marianas Business Plaza, Susupe from 8:00AM - 11:30AM**
- Dec. 16 at Lucky De Market, Dan Dan from 8:00AM - 11:30AM**

Clinical check with provider includes routine wellness exam, physical screening for height and weight, and/or consultation for other concerns. Other community health services: blood pressure check, glucose check, resources & referrals.

**Child Health Check**

**Dec 6th & 20th**

- Dec. 6 at Angel Market, Kagman from 1:00PM - 4:30PM**
- Dec. 20 at Tanapag Youth Center from 1:00PM - 4:30PM**

For children 0-17 years old. Clinical check with provider includes developmental behavioral assessment, measurement and growth, other health screening, and/or consultation for other concerns.

**Women Health Check**

**Dec 27th**

- Dec. 27 at Santa Remedios Church, Tanapag from 8:00AM-11:30AM**

Recommended for women who haven't seen a provider in over a year for clinical services: Pap Smears, breast exams, prenatal care, postpartum care, and/or contraceptive counseling and methods.

**DECEMBER IS HIV/AIDS AWARENESS MONTH**

(670) 287-9926/9927/9929 [www.chcc.health](http://www.chcc.health) @cnmichcc

**WHAT TO BRING:**

- INSURANCE CARD** (Medicaid and most private insurances accepted)
- VALID PHOTO ID** (Driver's license, Passport, Mayor's ID, etc.)



Faith, Hope and

**KARIDAT**

Catholic Charities - Diocese of Chalan Kanoa

## Request for Proposal for Financial Audit

Karidat Social Services is soliciting competitive sealed proposals to perform a financial and compliance audit in accordance with the Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS), the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and in accordance with the provisions of Uniform Guidance for the fiscal years 2023, 2024 and 2025.

### I. Contents of Proposal: The following information must be included in the Audit Proposal:

- Title Page Containing
  - RFP Subject
  - Name of the Firm
  - Local Address
  - Telephone Number(s)
  - Email address
  - Name of contact person
  - Submission date

### II. Transmittal Letter:

- A brief statement of your understanding of the work to be performed and an affirmative statement to perform work within the time period stipulated.
- State all-inclusive fees for which the audit will be performed.

### III. Firm Profile:

Provide a brief description of your firm's personnel education background and experience, number of staff, staff level (partner, manager, supervisor, etc.) and listing of clients serviced. The firm must make an affirmative statement that at least the partners are Certified Public Accounts (CPA's).

### IV. Proposal Evaluation Criteria: The proposal will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria.

- Responsiveness of the proposal in clearly stating understanding of the work to be performed.
  - Audit coverage
  - Overall estimates as well as the time estimates for each major section of the work to be performed.
- Qualifications and experience of the firm
  - Size and structure of the firm
  - Ability to maintain continuity of project
  - Experience of the firm in auditing Federal Financial Assistance programs and Non-Profit Organizations.
- Qualification and experience of staff to be assigned: education, position in the firm, number of years, and types of experience will be considered
  - Qualifications of the audit team
  - Supervision to be exercised over the firm's audit team
- Audit Fee

### V. Audit Administration Matters:

- Karidat staff will prepare schedule as required by the Auditor.
- Audit Planning meetings, interim conferences and exit conference may be attended by the following officials
  - Karidat's Board of Directors, the Executive Director, Accountants, and the Administrative Officer.
- Karidat will issue the Contract Award on February 9, 2024.
- The audit field work must be completed by May 15, 2024.
- The draft audit report must be completed by June 15, 2024.
- The Final Audit Report for each year will be transmitted on June 30th of the corresponding year.

**VI. Confidentiality of Audit Proposals:** All audit proposals will be reviewed in a confidential manner. Proposals must be labeled "CONFIDENTIAL" and transmitted to the Executive Director, Karidat Social Services, P.O. Box 501058, Saipan, MP 96950. It may also be hand delivered to Karidat's Office located at the, 5483 Dandan Road, Dandan Village, Saipan.

## 'A TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY'

## UOG, families celebrate 220 graduates

Family members, friends, and dignitaries from across the Micronesia region gathered to celebrate 220 graduates during the University of Guam's Fanuchanan 2023 Commencement Ceremony last Sunday, Dec. 17, at the UOG Calvo Field House.

The commencement speaker, a former high school dropout who grew up poor, and became an internationally known motivational and keynote speaker, shared some of his life-changing lessons.

Dr. Samuel Betances said before he got accepted into college, he volunteered for jobs that no one else wanted, and in doing so received mentorship that encouraged him to read.



Members of the Class of Fanuchanan 2023 celebrate after turning their tassels at the University of Guam Commencement Ceremony on Sunday, Dec. 17, at the UOG Calvo Field House.

"Read memoirs about people who had it tougher than you that bounced back and managed to excel," said Betances, who holds a mas-

ter's degree and a doctoral degree in education from Harvard University.

He urged the graduates to continue learning, become

someone's mentor, and be part of change for a better community.

"The fires are raging, and it is your turn to hold the hose," he said, receiving an enthusiastic response from the crowd.

UOG president Anita Borja Enriquez encouraged the graduates to share the university's "values of respect, compassion and community."

"Give back in your capacities as new professionals, as value-added critical thinkers and problem solvers, be represented in all industry sectors, and work collaboratively and in harmony with and through others as Triton alumni," the president said.

Aspiring psychologist Haley Mae M. Carreon is the valedictorian. Born in Guam and the daughter of Filipino immigrants Andy Carreon, an electrical engineer, and Shirley Carreon, an accountant, Haley Carreon credits her family's strong support of her education since childhood. She said she practiced good time management, a solid work ethic, and humility she learned from home. She studied psychology as her major and sociology was her minor.

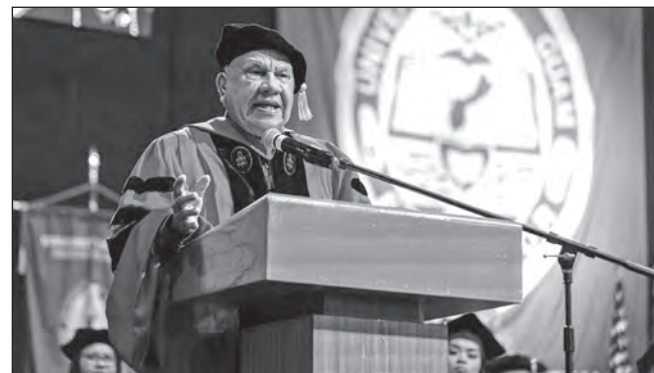
"We gather here not just as graduates but also as people who have experienced a transformative journey, molded by the obstacles we have overcome, the knowledge we have gained, and the connections we have created here at UOG," the valedictorian said. "Today is not just a culmination of four years of hard work, it is a celebration of resilience and growth."



UOG president Anita Borja Enriquez delivers her message during UOG's Fanuchanan 2023 Commencement Ceremony last Sunday, Dec. 17, at the UOG Calvo Field House.



Class of Fanuchanan 2023 valedictorian Haley Mae M. Carreon delivers her valedictory message.



Commencement speaker Dr. Samuel Betances was a former high school dropout who grew up poor and became an internationally known motivational and keynote speaker.

The graduates overcame almost three years of the pandemic and the devastation caused by Typhoon Mawar.

The commencement also

celebrated the first group of graduates in the Master of Accountancy Program at the School of Business Administration. (UOG)

## COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION

### OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## INVITATION FOR BIDS

## CUC-IFB-24-003

### Carolina Heights Waterline Replacement

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Carolina Heights Waterline Replacement in Tinian, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The project consists of the installation of a waterline main, service laterals, connection to the existing waterline main, and the installation of fire hydrants.

*The project is funded by a grant from the US Department of Interior/Office of Insular Affairs (US DOI/OIA) and CUC. The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from US DOI/OIA.*

CUC requires the project to be completed in **210 calendar days** from the date of award of the contract.

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The IFB package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference will be held on **December 12, 2023 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No. 17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

**One (1) original and Five (5) copies of the bid MUST** be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-24-003, Carolina Heights Waterline Replacement" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on December 27, 2023**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before the due date and time or post-marked before the due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.**

A Bid Guarantee of **fifteen percent (15%)** of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The bid guarantee may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety.

A **Payment Bond** of one hundred (100%) percent and a **Performance Bond** of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract. Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on December 14, 2023** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, Jr., CUC Procurement & Supply Purchasing Administrator, via email address [manny.sablan@cucgov.org](mailto:manny.sablan@cucgov.org), with a copy to Larry Manacop, Acting Chief Engineer via email at [larry.manacop@cucgov.org](mailto:larry.manacop@cucgov.org), Joel Puyat, Engineer via email at [joel.puyat@cucgov.org](mailto:joel.puyat@cucgov.org) and Ms. Christie L. Sablan, Procurement & Supply, Senior Administrative Technician via email address at [christie.sablan@cucgov.org](mailto:christie.sablan@cucgov.org).

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in said bid proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

BETTINA G. TERLAJE  
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN  
Purchasing Administrator

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

### CNMI GOVERNMENT

## INVITATION TO BID

## IITB NO.: DPW24-ITB No.: 42400017

SUBMISSION DATE: January 19, 2024 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

### "Repair of the Sugar Dock Beach Park"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

**THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.**

The project package will be available on or after **December 19, 2023** at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan. A non-refundable payment of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at the DPW Technical Services Division.

There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **January 05, 2024**, 9:00 a.m. local time at the Project Site at Marine Beach, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All question regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **January 10, 2024** to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ RAY N. YUMUL  
SECRETARY, DPW

/S/ BRIEN SERS NICHOLAS JR.  
Acting Director, Division of  
Procurement Services

ANTONIO SN. BORJA  
Chairman

JAMES M. MENDRISA  
Vice Chairman

HENRY H. SAN NICOLAS  
Member

DONALD M. HOSCHKEBER  
Member

CHARLENE M. LIZAMA  
Executive Director

## TINIAN CASINO GAMING CONTROL COMMISSION

Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan  
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMCS § 9910(a), the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission (TCGCC) hereby gives notice that it will hold its Regular Meeting, on Friday, December 22, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. at the TCGCC Conference Room.

### AGENDA

- I. PRELIMINARY**
  - a. Call to Order
  - b. Roll Call
  - c. Adoption of Agenda
  - d. Adoption of Minutes
    1. October 19, 2023 – Regular Meeting
    2. November 29, 2023 – Special Meeting
- II. PUBLIC COMMENTS<sup>1</sup>**
- III. REPORTS**
  - a. Chair's Report
  - b. Executive Director's Report
- IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
  - a. Status Update of Bridge Investment Group/Tinian Diamond Casino
- V. NEW BUSINESS**
  - a. ED Recommendation No. 2023-05
  - b. ED Recommendation No. 2023-05 CSL/CS(e)
  - c. Operations of Tinian Diamond Casino
- VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION<sup>2</sup>**
- VII. OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS**
- VIII. MISCELLANEOUS AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**
- IX. ADJOURNMENT**

<sup>1</sup> Public comments are limited to 30 minutes and each remark is limited to 3 minutes. Everyone is welcome to submit written comments.  
<sup>2</sup> Pursuant to 1 CMCS § 9912, the Commission may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

# December proclaimed 4D Driving Prevention Month

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang, along with the CNMI Department of Public Safety, recently proclaimed December 2023 as “CNMI Drunk, Drugged, Drowsy and Distracted (4D) Driving Prevention Month.”

The proclamation was made in order to promote DPS’ CNMI 4D Driving Prevention Campaign, which seeks to fight the problem of dangerous and distracted driving by reminding the public of its hazardous consequences.

DPS Commissioner Clement Bermudes emphasized the importance of public awareness when it comes to 4-D Driving. DPS recognizes that

the increase in alcohol consumption during the holidays correlates to an increase in vehicular accidents as well.

To prevent this, the 4D Campaign will be active and in full force this holiday season by conducting zero-tolerance enforcement activities and providing the traditional Designated Driver program.

Palacios and Apatang urge the public to take advantage of the Designated Driver program that DPS is coordinating. They also expressed their gratitude toward DPS for continuing to pursue efforts that keep our community safe.

To avail of DPS’ 4D Safe Ride Program, call 670-783-7433 (RIDE). (DPS)



DPS Members of the CNMI Department of Public Safety, led by DPS Commissioner Clement Bermudes, pose with Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang during a recent proclamation declaring December 2023 as “CNMI Drunk, Drugged, Drowsy and Distracted (4D) Driving Prevention Month” at the Office of the Governor on Capital Hill.



The DPS Christmas caroling group belts out holiday songs during the proclamation declaring December 2023 as “CNMI Drunk, Drugged, Drowsy and Distracted (4D) Driving Prevention Month” at the Office of the Governor.

DPS DPS Commissioner Clement Bermudes shakes the hand of Gov. Arnold I. Palacios after the proclamation.



DPS “Santa Cop” updates Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and DPS Commissioner Clement Bermudes on his Christmas route this holiday season.



DPS Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang waves his hand while DPS Commissioner Clement Bermudes looks on.



## COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



### INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-24-002

#### AGINGAN WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT IMPROVEMENTS

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Construction of Agingan Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The work consists of furnishing all labor, supervision, equipment, materials and supplies for the construction of various improvements within the Agingan Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) for the project referred to as the AGINGAN WWTP IMPROVEMENTS, Saipan, CNMI under Project No. S18-065 and Project No. S20-079.

The work generally includes, but is not limited to:

##### Project No. S18-065

Installation of the owner-furnished primary screen within 120 calendar days after Notice to Proceed is issued. Additionally, replacement of the clarifier drive; rehabilitation of the headworks includes replacement of the weir gates to stop gate, a 1/2-ton hand crank hoist/crane; clarifier bypass; electrical service rehabilitation, replacement of the existing Motor Control Center (MCC), installation of a generator automatic transfer switch (ATS) and digester decanter improvements. The work shall be done in accordance with Project No. S18-065 Plans and Specifications.

##### Project No. S20-079

Provision of temporary facilities including bypass pumping; furnishing and installing new Vortex Grit Removal Equipment and headworks slide gates, which will require demolition of certain elements within and improvements to the existing headworks channel and deck area; replacement of the existing surface aerator equipment in the North/South Aeration Tanks and Aerobic Digester Tank with a new surface aerator equipment which will require modifications to the existing concrete tank structures; replacement of existing pipe supports for the Aeration Basin influent piping; associated electrical, instrumentation, and control improvements; demobilization; and all other work described in Project No. S20-079 Plans and Specifications.

The work shall be done without disruption to the daily operation of the wastewater system.

CUC requires the Project to be completed within 820 calendar days from the date of the award of contract.

**The project is funded by a grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.**

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a Site Visit is scheduled on **December 27, 2023 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

**One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies** must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked “CUC-IFB-24-002, Agingan Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements”, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on January 18, 2024**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.**

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor’s preparation of a bid under the contract.

A **Bid Guarantee** of not less than fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The bid guarantee may be in cash, certified check, cashier’s check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidder. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers’ questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI’s Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI’s Insurance Code.*

All bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 (ChST) on December 28, 2023** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email at [manny.sablan@cucgov.org](mailto:manny.sablan@cucgov.org) with a copy to Mr. Larry Manacop, Acting Chief Engineer – via email at [larry.manacop@cucgov.org](mailto:larry.manacop@cucgov.org), and Marcela Tenorio, Procurement & Supply, Senior Administrative Technician – via email at [marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org](mailto:marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org).

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

BETTINA G. TERLAJE  
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN  
Purchasing Administrator

# Opinion

Hafa Adai!

## Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 251

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,  
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI  
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

**Mark Rabago** EDITOR  
mark\_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

### EDITORIAL

## High-mindedness and hypocrisy: From the UN to Congress, posturing about peace and free speech

**W**e have no qualms with much of the United Nations resolution expressing “grave concern over the catastrophic humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip and the suffering of the Palestinian civilian population” and emphasizing that “the Palestinian and Israeli civilian populations must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law.”

Indeed, a new report from a field hospital by CNN’s Clarissa Ward, the first Western journalist to enter Gaza since Oct. 7, shows children injured and orphaned by Israel’s assault. The images should agonize even those who unequivocally condemn the horrific brutality of Hamas’ terrorist attack. Israel has a right to use its military might to kill and dismantle those who seek its destruction, but it must take great pains to spare innocents. It is right and proper for the United States, Israel’s ally, to say this loudly and clearly and ensure consequences for unintended killings.

That UN resolution also urged a humanitarian ceasefire and the return of all remaining hostages—without mentioning Hamas. Austria corrected the record, clarifying that hostages were “held by Hamas and other groups,” and added the word “immediate” before a phrase demanding humanitarian access to those hostages. That amendment fell short of the two-thirds majority needed to secure passage.

Then the United States proffered an amendment saying the world body “unequivocally rejects and condemns the heinous terrorist attacks by Hamas that took place in Israel...and the taking of hostages.” That too fell short of a two-thirds majority.

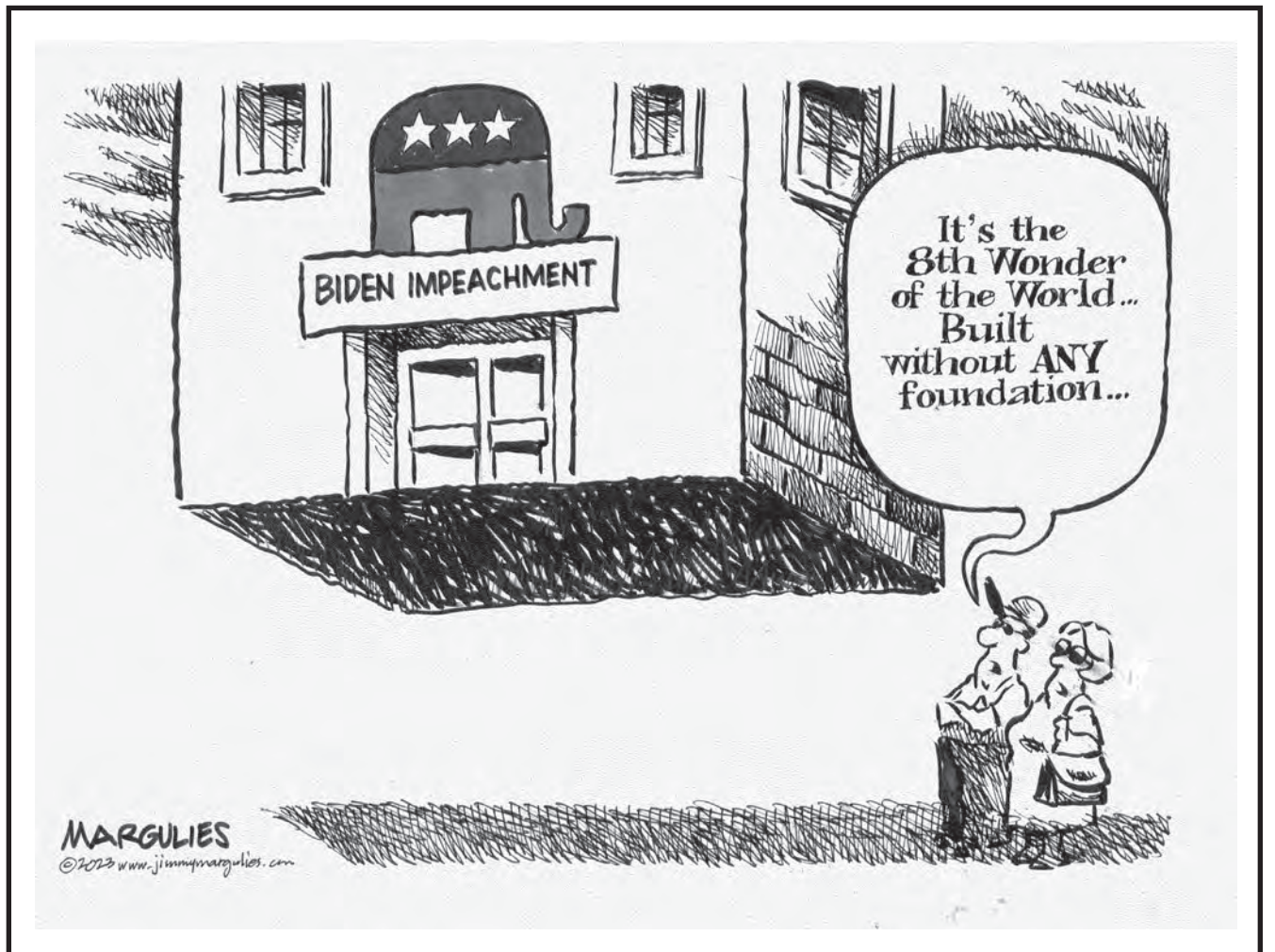
And so in the end, the United Nations—with the United States voting against and Germany, the United Kingdom and many other nations abstaining—passed a resolution urging peace and calm that refuses to admit that Hamas gleefully murdered and kidnapped Israelis and continues to keep more than 100 people hostage, and therefore keeps the world’s most powerful nation on the sidelines. What does this accomplish?

“What does this accomplish” is also a fair question to put to the protesters who are shutting down highways, forcing the cancellation of Christmas-tree lightings and the like to try to focus attention on Gazans’ suffering. We’re skeptical this is effectively targeted civil disobedience; it seems likelier to frustrate Americans than to win them over to the cause.

The world needs fewer political games and more constructive action to weaken Hamas and focus Israel’s response. Here at home, the United States needs far less opportunistic political posturing by elected officials about Harvard, Penn and MIT.

We didn’t much like the testimony to Congress by the presidents of those institutions; it’s true, Rep. Elise Stefanik’s show trial made them look insensitive. Nor can we defend elite universities’ habit, over many years, of policing speech that

See HIGH on Page 9



## If we don't approve more aid for Ukraine, the conflict in Europe will grow

**W**e are running out of time and money for Ukraine. Last week, the White House Office of Management and Budget made it clear that without the approval of additional funding, we will no longer be able to aid Ukraine.

If we fail to heed this warning, we risk derailing the progress Ukraine has made and handing Russian President Vladimir Putin a victory. We also risk sending a message to other autocrats that incursion into free democracies will go unopposed.

Putin’s war in Ukraine threatens the liberal world order that so many fought and died for in World War II. The domino effect of his victory would jeopardize the free world for generations to come.

In the words of President Franklin D. Roosevelt: “We have learned that we cannot live alone, at peace; that our own well-being is dependent on the well-being of other nations far away.”

That is why we must act.

If we allow Putin to run roughshod over Ukraine, it is only a matter of time before we face the greatest conflict in Eastern Europe since World War II, requiring direct engagement by the United States to defend our NATO allies.

If Putin is successful in destroying Ukraine, he will seek to reconstitute the former Soviet Union. He would attempt to form a federation with Belarus and Ukraine by installing a puppet government and then target Moldova, the Baltics, Georgia and others. Those who suggest that Ukraine’s war is not our fight fail to remember that should Russia expand its attack and cross a border into one of these NATO countries, we are bound by Article 5 of the NATO charter to defend them.

Simultaneously, we must show leaders in Beijing and Tehran that we will not cower in the face of tyranny—that the values we fought for in World War II still matter. The Ukrainians’ fight is our fight. They are fighting for the same principles on which NATO and the United Nations were founded.

The decisions we make here in Congress about this conflict will affect not only the survival of Ukraine and its neighbors—they also will affect our own national security. To understand this, look to our history.

During World War II, Roosevelt championed the United States as an “arsenal of democracy” to describe our role in providing weapons to democracies fighting to defend themselves. This helped the Allied forces win the war, while kick-starting decades of manufacturing growth and the creation of 17 million new civilian jobs here at home.

The military aid we have appropriated for Ukraine is no different.

By MIKE QUIGLEY

Chicago Tribune

U.S. Rep. Mike Quigley represents Illinois’  
5th Congressional District.



It has delivered weapons to Ukraine and provided funding to replace that equipment for the Department of Defense, creating manufacturing jobs in the U.S. and improving our own military readiness.

Unfortunately, in recent months, Congress has repeatedly fumbled opportunities to send aid to Ukraine, bringing us to the do-or-die scenario we face today.

In September, a majority of Republicans voted against a \$300 million aid package to Ukraine, and a few days later, leadership refused to include additional funding in the continuing resolution. With these actions, Republicans rejected the Reagan Doctrine, which states that we must stand by our democratic allies and defy Soviet aggression. Those values are now seemingly dead within the Republican Party.

To make matters worse, Republicans were mired in intraparty squabbles for three critical weeks, leaving Congress gridlocked.

There are those who have turned the issue of Ukraine funding into an unnecessary, unrealistic choice between Ukraine and Israel. But we do not have to choose.

In the words of NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg: “We have the capability and the strength to address different challenges at the same time. We don’t have the luxury of choosing only one threat and one challenge.”

The conflict in Israel and the conflict in Ukraine are linked. After all, Hamas and Iranian representatives met with Putin in Moscow. Just as Iran is supporting Hamas’ attack on Israel, Iran is also believed to be assisting Putin in his invasion of Ukraine.

To defeat the terrorist threat in Israel, we must also help Ukraine defend itself from an evil autocrat.

As the White House made clear last week: Time is running out to act.

We owe it to the American people and to our allies to protect democracy at all costs. We owe it to future generations to prevent an expanded global crisis. Now is our chance—let’s take it.

**EDITORIAL POLICY**

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

## You don't have to hate Trump to want a better president

It's a common accusation: "You just hate Trump." But this dismissive assertion always implies a subtext: "Your hatred of Trump blinds you to his virtues and accomplishments."

Sometimes this "hatred" of Trump is called TDS—Trump Derangement Syndrome; again, your derangement has made it impossible for you to evaluate Donald Trump fairly.

But whether one is deranged or genuinely hates Trump is irrelevant to this essential fact: Putting aside for a moment his less-than-impressive four years in office and his burgeoning tendencies toward authoritarianism, Donald J. Trump is just not a good man.

Of course, this is only an assertion, and if you're one of Trump's millions of devoted supporters, you've already stopped reading.

But if you're among those Americans who are as yet uncommitted to either side—the ones who may make the difference in the election of 2024—consider the role that a candidate's basic character should have in how we choose who leads our nation.

I'm not an expert on the 45 men (Grover Cleveland was president twice) who we've elected to our highest office, but I've devoted part of the last few years to reading their biographies. I've made my way up through H.W. Brand's "Reagan: The Life." I haven't skipped any, not even Franklin Pierce and Millard Fillmore.

The presidency has been occupied by many flawed men. Some have been slaveholders, Indian killers, drinkers, incompetents, adulterers, liars and corrupt cowards. Others have been decent, honest, skillful, hardworking family men, upright, honorable and principled.

Mostly, though, our presidents have been messy combinations of defects and virtues. In short, they're like us, apt repre-

sentatives of our complicated national psyche.

But in terms of basic character, have we ever had a president like Trump?

Richard Nixon was a liar, but he lied with purpose, to cover up, for example, his connection to Watergate. He never boasted about the size of the crowd at his inauguration to make himself look good.

John F. Kennedy was fond of women who were not his wife, but, as a rule, he didn't treat women as disposable adjuncts to his ego. Other presidents were philanderers, as well, but none publicly ridiculed women for their looks or called them pigs, dogs or maggots.

And Ronald Reagan, who probably did more than anyone to create and propagate the dismissive contempt for the federal government that so many Americans feel, embodied a profound respect and appreciation for our constitutional system. It is impossible to imagine Reagan attempting to subvert a legitimate election because he couldn't bear being called a loser.

In short, 44 men have served as president; then there's Donald Trump.

Here's the odd thing: I'm acquainted with some of the people who, in their defense of Trump, have accused me of hating him. They, as a rule, are not liars. They never cheat on their wives or, if they did, they would feel guilty and not brag about it. They care more about their children than they do about themselves.

They don't contrive to defraud others. They pay their bills. They don't brag. They're generally able to accept defeat (except Trump's, of course) without whining and complaint. They've never gone bankrupt and never been

By **JOHN M. CRISP**

Tribune News Service

*John M. Crisp, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service, lives in Texas and can be reached at jcrispcolumns@gmail.com.*



indicted for a slew of felonies.

No, the people who charge me with hating Trump are generally good people who have more character than the man they're defending.

How much should character matter when we're choosing a president? Trump's defenders may argue that the quality of his administration compensates for his character flaws. But that's a hard case to sustain in light of the wall he promised to build but never did, the \$8 trillion that he added to the national debt, his shaky response to COVID and his promotion of a culture of disunity, anger, grievance and complaint.

In short, you don't have to be filled with hatred or deranged to want someone in the White House with better character than Trump. Or to imagine that we could fill the office with a man—or woman!—who is at least as good as most of us are.

## Listen up. The closing of the teenage mind is almost complete

My revelation came in the spring, after a typical day in 11th-grade AP English. The topic was gender and how the experiences of the authors we were studying related to our world today. Unfortunately, I didn't hear anything I hadn't heard many times before.

Class discussions tend to go like that. We've been inculcated with approved positions on issues such as gender identity, patriarchy, cultural appropriation and microaggressions. Any perceived misstep can ruin a reputation in a flash.

But then something unusual happened. After the period ended, someone floated an opinion that, if shared in the classroom, would have elicited a clanging silence. Hesitantly at first, we found ourselves having a genuine discussion, the air crackling with competing ideas that made the moment feel almost transgressive. I left with more questions than answers, which is how learning should be.

That's when I had my revelation: Just when my friends and I should be trying out many perspectives and figuring out where we stand, we're self-censoring, following familiar scripts. I had to wonder, if we spend our teenage years afraid we might share our thoughts in the wrong way or at the wrong moment, how is this affecting a crucial ingredient in becoming an adult: the ability to think critically?

Almost a century ago, the psychologist Jean Piaget defined the stages of cognitive development. Up until about age 2, children learn about cause and effect through their actions. For the next five years, they learn through pretend play but struggle with logic. By middle school, they're in the "concrete operational stage." Their thinking is more logical but still rigid. Then around age 12, children enter the "formal operational stage," becoming capable of theoretical and abstract reasoning. This progression isn't just about acquiring knowledge; it's about a change in the very nature of how we think.

Madeline Levine, a psychologist and expert in child development, says today's adolescents aren't making it all the way: "We're turning out kids who don't think in complex ways."

"Some of what I see," she adds, "is even pre-operational thinking. It's I can only see it from my point of view. This egocentrism starts to go away in concrete operational thinking."

What's interesting, she notes, is that high school students do demonstrate abstract thinking in specific situations—they can do calculus and physics, after all. "But within the cultural bubble, they're still stuck at the earlier stages. It's a developmental issue that isn't just about, 'How are kids going to learn?' but 'How are they going to face life?'"

In other words, we're growing older, but we're not growing up.

Greg Lukianoff, co-author of "The Canceling of the American Mind," believes that our "hyper-polarized society" is partly responsible for the problem. "I fear that the older generations' nasty, ad hominem way of arguing has rubbed off on you," he told me. Instead of seeking exposure to opposing concepts, we stick to what's "appropriate."

And even if we do grapple with a wider range of perspectives in the privacy of our own minds, most of us are afraid to share them. In a 2020 survey conducted by Samuel Abrams and Next Gen Politics, 60% of high school students in New York City said they wouldn't offer their opinions in class because of concerns about how others would respond.

Even when teenagers want an open dialogue, they don't agree on what that looks like. A 2022 Knight Foundation survey of almost 11,000 U.S. high school students found that although 89% agreed that people should be allowed to express "unpopular" opinions, only 40% agreed that people should be allowed to say whatever they want, even if it's "offensive."

Of course, almost anything can be deemed offensive.

During lunch at school recently, someone brought up transgender females getting banned from British rowing. Letting trans women compete on a women's rowing team, one kid said, would be like allowing a trans LeBron James to compete in the WNBA. A girl we were sitting with immediately called him transphobic and patriarchal. She didn't just disagree with him. She demanded that he retract what he said.

"Just because you're offended," he replied, a little frustrated, "doesn't mean it's offensive."

What happened next was predictable. The girl shunned him, told her friends he was a jerk, and later, when another student complained to me about what he'd said, I avoided the topic entirely because I knew the drill: If you don't agree with me, you're wrong. If you offend me, you're canceled.

In the 1950s, the psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg developed a model for moral reasoning that follows a trajectory similar to Piaget's model for cognitive development: Children progress from more concrete to more abstract thinking, from more rigidity to more flexibility. Levine says that what alarms her about the rigid, concrete take on right or wrong she sees in my generation is that without the "capacity to hear opposing points of view, you don't develop empathy. And you'll need empathy to end up with a good partner, to be a good parent and to be a good citizen."

Julie Lythcott-Haims, a former Stanford dean, agrees: "We're in desperate need of humans who can grapple openly with ideas, and disagree, as reasonable people will, without villainizing each other."

By **ZACH GOTTLIEB**

Los Angeles Times

*Zach Gottlieb is a Los Angeles high school senior and the founder of Talk With Zach, a Gen Z platform that hosts conversations about emotional well-being.*



I see teenagers unintentionally becoming more unforgiving and judgmental rather than open-minded and compassionate. When we can't or don't talk freely, we lose the chance to find real common ground, acknowledge complexity or grasp that even our own opinions can be malleable. If we listen only to those who already agree with us, we won't make wider connections. We won't grow.

Some people told me not to write this piece—that I could get canceled online, cut off by peers and perhaps even rejected by colleges. That's a risk I'm willing to take.

I definitely don't have all the answers, but I believe that daring to get past what's acceptable and engage in open dialogue—as we did walking away from English class that day—is the key way to finding them and becoming the empathetic critical thinkers we need to be as we grow into adulthood.

Let's start talking.






### HIGH

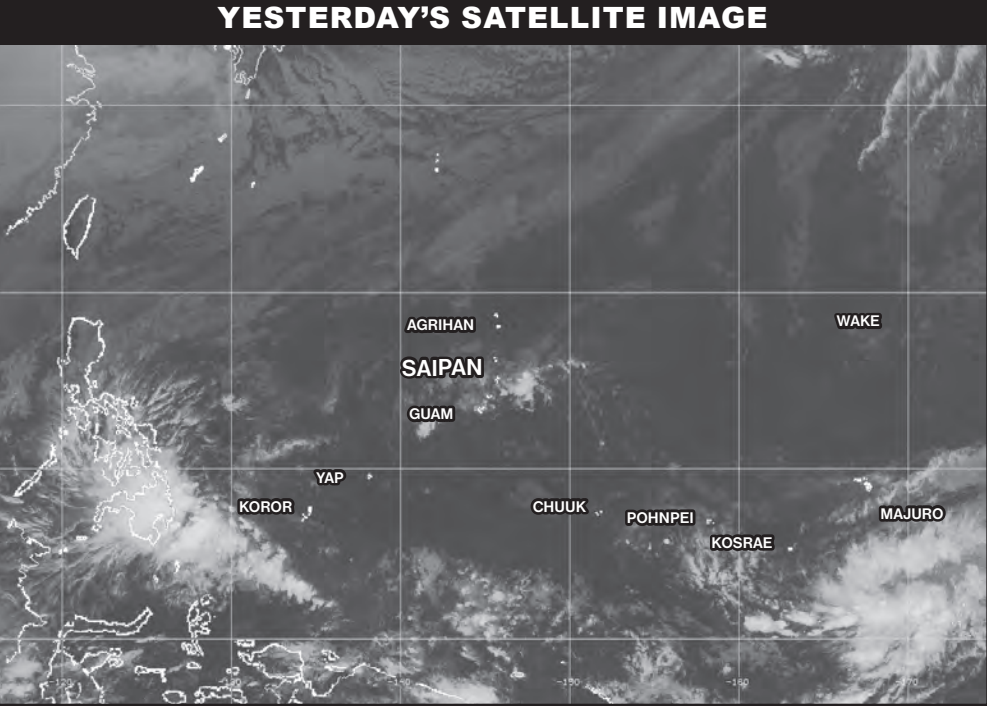
From page 8

offends left-wing pieties and bend to the sensitivities of those offended—until those offended happened to be Jews. The answer to the fix they're in is to bend their campuses decisively back toward places that allow free expression even when that deeply offends some people.

But every member of Congress who voted for Stefanik's resolution urging the firing of the leaders of these private institutions because of their inartful answers backing speech rights should be embarrassed. Colleges' coddling of their students has been the problem, not their belated and correct assertion that offensive political speech should almost always be free.

# The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
									
Mostly cloudy becoming partly cloudy by Tuesday night. Isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.		Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.		Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.		Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.		Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.	
87	77°	87	77°	86	77°	86	77°	86	77°



PICTURE TIME: 7:35 AM, MONDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite imagery is showing increasing clouds and showers this morning. Latest buoy and altimetry passes are showing seas of 7 to 10 feet. Winds are moderate to fresh.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: <https://www.weather.gov/gum/>

MICRONESIA			▲▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	87° / 79°	
Palau	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°	
Yap	Partly Cloudy	87° / 80°	
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	86° / 80°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	87° / 78°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	87° / 78°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 81°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:36 AM	5:50 PM
Wednesday	6:37 AM	5:51 PM
Thursday	6:37 AM	5:51 PM
Friday	6:38 AM	5:52 PM
Saturday	6:38 AM	5:52 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	11:55 AM	-	-
Wednesday	-	12:05 AM	12:35 PM
Thursday	-	1:00 AM	1:14 PM
Friday	-	1:54 AM	1:55 PM
Saturday	-	2:50 AM	2:37 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼ °F
Auckland	Thunderstorms	70° / 61°	
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	36° / 16°	
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	70° / 63°	
Honolulu	Windy	79° / 71°	
London	Partly Cloudy	39° / 34°	
Los Angeles	Sunny	74° / 50°	
Manila	Partly Cloudy	88° / 77°	
Melbourne	Rain	72° / 57°	
Miami	Cloudy	77° / 73°	
New York	Partly Cloudy	41° / 37°	
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	48° / 39°	
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	37° / 27°	
Busan	Sunny	45° / 28°	
Rome	Showers	54° / 46°	
Salem	Cloudy	58° / 50°	
San Francisco	Sunny	58° / 46°	
Seoul	Sunny	32° / 12°	
Tokyo	Sunny	50° / 36°	
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	45° / 36°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
6:22 AM	Low Tide	-0.22	
1:41 PM	High Tide	1.78	
8:00 PM	Low Tide	0.85	
12:27 AM	High Tide	1.31	

## FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 30, 2023

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA076	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	Daily
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5	UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily	UA189	00:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6
UA193	7:50PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau	PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA183	7:55PM	9:50PM	Daily	UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
				UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
7C3403/2305	4:40AM	10:20PM	Daily	UA189/174	00:40AM	8:45AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA076/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam	UA192/174	10:40PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA076/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	UA184/174	10:55PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via Guam
				7C2306/3406	11:15PM	3:30PM+1	Daily
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:15AM	6:10AM	Daily	7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
7C3403	4:40AM	8:35AM	Daily	TW307	7:45PM	1:15AM+1	Daily
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily	7C3404	10:15PM	3:35AM+1	Daily

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

## STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

### FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 30, 2023

SAIPAN TO ROTA					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	08:30	09:00	Oct 21-31, 2023
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	10:30	11:00	Daily
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Oct 21-31, 2023
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	11:30	12:00	Saturday & Sunday
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:30	14:00	Monday To Friday
3104	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	11:30	12:00	Monday To Friday

GUAM TO ROTA					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	12:30	13:00	Monday To Friday

SAIPAN TO TINIAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1201	SAIPAN	TINIAN	7:30	7:45	Daily
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1206	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1207	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN					
FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2101	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2106	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2107	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

**NEWS DESK** For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235.3740. E-mail: [editor@saipantribune.com](mailto:editor@saipantribune.com). Website:[www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com).

**CUSTOMER SERVICE** For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

**SUBSCRIPTION** Published Monday to Friday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of \$180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

**ADVERTISING** For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: [sales@saipantribune.com](mailto:sales@saipantribune.com)

# Business

## Sustainable clothing at newly opened Will & Ebs' Tropic Threads

By MARK RABAGO  
mark\_rabago@saipantribune.com  
EDITOR

**T**wo best friends originally from Southern Indiana and co-teachers at Saipan Community School have opened a thrift shop in San Vicente called Will & Ebs' Tropic Threads.

Jessica Williams and Jessica Eberhardt, who their friends call Will and Ebs (hence the initials at the start of the shop's name), held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially open Tropic Threads last week.

"We are a sustainable boutique that specializes in reselling gently used and overstocked clothing as well as handmade art made locally. Our business started operating in 2021, selling at the Sabulu Market weekly and many pop-up events too. We finally opened our own brick-and-mortar storefront and had our opening last Dec. 9," the two Jessicas said.

Williams and Eberhardt said they originally started entertaining the idea of opening a thrift store focused on quality and closing the fast fashion on Saipan back in 2019.

"After living on the island for a couple of years we realized that not only did we want to be able to buy quality clothing secondhand because of the environmental advantage and also because of our own frugality, but also to have somewhere to take unwanted pieces that still have life left in them, but weren't serving their current owners."

Since opening Tropic Threads earlier this month, the shop—located in the same building as the post office in San Vicente is situated—has had its fair share of customers.

"So far, we have had great reception from the community we have received support each day that we have been open and many people have thanked us for bringing this type of store closer to a resi-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Will & Ebs' Tropic Threads is located in the same building where the post office in San Vicente Village is also situated.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Will & Ebs' Tropic Threads' "third owner" Samson the therapy dog.

dential area. I think the fact that we are so close to Dan Dan and Kagman makes it much easier for families to shop as they're going about their daily lives instead of making a special trip down to a more popular shopping area," they said.

Tropic Threads sells an eclectic collection of pre-loved as well as new items, but has been getting rave reviews for its unique merchandise.

"Right now, some of our

best sellers would be resin earrings made from locally sourced flowers using things like flame tree petals and other beautiful things that we can find locally like plumeria. We also had good reception selling our crochet shoulder bags and clothing items like women's sundresses and men's jeans in a variety of large sizes and styles," said Williams and Eberhardt.

Tropic Threads also sells one-of-a-kind handmade items like



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Will & Ebs' Tropic Threads' resin earrings made from locally sourced flowers.

Christmas ornaments coasters, crochet bags with local flowers, sea glass art with local sea glass, and pottery pieces sourced from beaches around the island. The store also recently added jewelry holders and other things to help display stuff at home.

"Two special things to know would be that we have gift cards available for purchase just in time for the holiday season. They are a perfect gift for somebody who you love but



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Will & Ebs' Tropic Threads is open Wednesday through Friday from 4pm to 7pm and Saturdays from 11am to 7pm.

something great home."

New customers shouldn't also be startled when they see a furry third member of Williams and Eberhardt's team when they shop at Tropic Threads.

"Another thing that we love about our store is that our beautiful boonie dog Samson is in with us every day that we are open. He also works as a therapy dog at Saipan Community School and is very kind, gentle, and safe. We encourage people to come in and visit with him even if they're feeling a little stressed but don't have time to shop. He is great company and we love that he's a part of our team."

Tropic Threads is open Wednesday through Friday from 4pm to 7pm and Saturdays from 11am to 7pm. The store can be reached on social media via Facebook or Instagram @wetropicthreads.

## Japan, ASEAN bolster ties at special summit focused on security, economy

**TOKYO** (AP)—Leaders from Japan and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, at a special summit in Tokyo on Sunday, adopted a joint vision that emphasizes security and economic cooperation while respecting the rule of law, amid growing tensions with China in regional seas.

Ties between Japan and the 10-member ASEAN bloc used to be largely based on Japanese assistance to the developing economies, in part due to lingering bitterness over Japan's wartime actions. But in recent years the relationship has focused more on security amid China's growing assertiveness in the South China Sea, while Japan's postwar pacifist stance and trust-building efforts have fostered friendlier relations.

The summit marks the 50th anniversary of official Japan-ASEAN ties, which started in 1973 with trade talks over Japanese synthetic rubber exports.

The leaders, in a joint statement, called for strengthening their "mutually beneficial" partnership and working together for peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific, especially in maritime security. They also called for economic security and greater supply chain resilience for the region and to promote the movement of one another's nationals.

"We affirm the shared view to promote a rules-based Indo-Pacific region that is free and open (and) embraces key principles such as ASEAN's unity and centrality, inclusiveness (and) transparency," according to the joint statement.

## Nissan expands research ties in China as part of bid to regain market share

**BEIJING** (AP)—Nissan Motor Co. is expanding its research ties with a leading Chinese university as it and other foreign car companies try to claw back market share in the important Chinese market.

The Japanese automaker announced Sunday that it would launch joint research next year with Tsinghua University on reaching Generation Z—defined for this project as those born between 1995 and 2009—and on the social responsibility of automakers in battery recycling, charging stations and other electric vehicle-related issues.

The major auto companies were caught flat-footed by a boom in electric vehicles in China that has given rise to new Chinese competitors that have gobbled up market share at home and are now moving into Southeast Asia, Europe and other overseas markets. Nissan's sales in China plunged 34% in the six months from April to September compared with a year earlier.

"Market conditions in China have become extremely tough," Masashi Matsuyama, the head of Nissan's Chinese investment company, said at a

news conference in Beijing.

Nissan plans to develop 10 further new-energy vehicles for the Chinese market, four under its own brand by 2026 and the other six for Chinese joint venture partners. The company is aiming to launch the first Nissan-branded model in the second half of next year.

The automaker is also stepping up its electric vehicle offerings in other markets. Nissan, which has an alliance with French automaker Renault SA, announced last month that it would retool a factory in Great Britain to

make electric versions of its two best-selling vehicles.

China's electric vehicles have become a trade issue for the European Union, which has launched an investigation into Chinese government subsidies to determine whether they have given China-based manufacturers an unfair competitive advantage.

Nissan and Tsinghua University have been research partners for several years. They established a joint center in 2016 to study electric vehicles and autonomous driving for the Chinese market.

# Nation

## White House, Senate border security talks grind on

» As Trump invokes Nazi-era 'blood' rhetoric against immigrants

WASHINGTON (AP)—Time slipping, White House and Senate negotiators struggled Sunday to reach a U.S. border security deal that would unlock President Joe Biden's request for billions of dollars worth of military aid for Ukraine and other national security needs before senators leave town for the holiday recess.

The Biden administration, which is becoming more deeply involved in the talks, is facing pressure from all sides over any deal. Negotiators insist they are making progress, but a hoped-for framework did not emerge. Republican leaders signaled that without bill text, an upcoming procedural would likely fail.

The talks come as Donald Trump, the Republican presidential front-runner in 2024, delivered alarming anti-immigrant remarks about "blood" purity over the weekend, echoing Nazi slogans of World War II at a political rally.

"They're poisoning the blood of our country," Trump said about the record numbers of immigrants coming to the U.S. without immediate legal status.

Speaking in the early-voting state of New Hampshire, Trump, drew on words similar to Adolf Hitler's "Mein Kampf" as the former U.S. president



Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, center, arrives for closed-door negotiations on a border security deal at the Capitol, Sunday, Dec. 17, 2023 in Washington.

berated Biden's team over the flow of migrants. "All over the world they're pouring into our country," Trump said.

Throughout the weekend, senators and top Biden officials, including Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, have been working intently behind closed doors at the Capitol to strike a border deal, which Republicans in Congress are demanding in exchange for any help for Ukraine, Israel and other national security needs. Mayorkas arrived for more talks late Sunday afternoon.

"Everyday we get closer, not farther away," said Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn., as talks wrapped up in the evening.

Their holiday recess postponed, Murphy and Sen. Kyrsten Sinema, the Arizona independent, acknowledged the difficulty of drafting, and securing support, for deeply complicated legislation on an issue that has vexed Congress for years. Ahead of more talks Monday, it is becoming apparent any action is unlikely before year's end.

Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina said senators don't want to be "jammed" by a last-minute compromise reached by negotiators.

"We're not anywhere close to a deal," Graham, whose staff has joined the talks, said Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press."

Graham predicted the deliberations will go into next year. He was among 15 Republican senators who wrote to GOP leadership urging them to wait until the House returns Jan. 8 to discuss the issue.

Top GOP negotiator Sen. James Lankford of Oklahoma and Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell also signaled in their own letter Sunday that talks still had a ways to go. Lankford said later that the January timeline was "realistic."

The Biden administration faces an increasingly difficult political situation as global migration is on a historic rise, and many migrants are fleeing persecution or leaving war-

torn countries for the United States, with smugglers capitalizing on the situation.

The president is being berated daily by Republicans, led by Trump, as border crossings have risen to levels that make even some in Biden's own Democratic Party concerned.

But the Biden administration, in considering revival of Trump-like policies, is drawing outrage from Democrats and immigrant advocates who say the ideas would gut the U.S. asylum system and spark fears of deportations from immigrants already living in the U.S.

The White House's failure to fully engage Latino lawmakers in the talks until recently, or ensure a seat at the negotiating table, has led to a near revolt from leaders of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

"It's unacceptable," said Rep. Nanette Barragan, D-Calif., chair of the Hispanic Caucus, on social media. "We represent border districts & immigrant communities that will be severely impacted by extreme changes to border policy."

Progressives in Congress are also warning the Biden administration off any severe policies that would bar immigrants a legal path to enter the country. "No backroom deal on the border without the involvement of the House, the House Hispanic Caucus, Latino senators is going to pass," said Rep. Ro Khanna, D-Calif., on Fox News.

## New study bolsters evidence severe obesity increasing in young US kids

NEW YORK (AP)—A new study adds to evidence that severe obesity is becoming more common in young U.S. children.

There was some hope that children in a government food program might be bucking a trend in obesity rates—earlier research found rates were dropping a little about a decade ago for those kids. But an update released Monday in the journal *Pediatrics* shows the rate bounced back up a bit by 2020.

The increase echoes other national data, which suggests around 2.5% of all preschool-aged children were severely obese during the same period.

"We were doing well and now we see this upward trend," said one of the study's authors, Heidi Blanck of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "We are dismayed at seeing these findings."

The study looked at children ages 2 to 4 enrolled in the Women, Infants and Children program, which provides healthy foods and other services to preschool-aged children in low-income families. The children were weighed and measured.

The researchers found that 2.1% of kids in the program were severely obese in

2010. Six years later, the rate had dipped to 1.8%. But by 2020, it was 2%. That translates to about 33,000 of more than 1.6 million kids in the WIC program.

Significant increases were seen in 20 states with the highest rate in California at 2.8%. There also were notable rises in some racial and ethnic groups. The highest rate, about 2.8%, was in Hispanic kids.

Experts say severe obesity at a very early age is nearly irreversible, and is strongly associated with chronic health problems and an early death.

It's not clear why the increase occurred, Blanck said.

When WIC obesity rates dropped, some experts attributed it to 2009 policy changes that eliminated juice from infant food packages, provided less saturated fat, and tried to make it easier to buy fruits and vegetables.

The package hasn't changed. But "the daily hardships that families living in poverty are facing may be harder today than they were 10 years ago, and the slight increases in the WIC package just weren't enough," said Dr. Sarah Armstrong, a Duke University childhood obesity researcher.

## Black American solidarity with Palestinians is rising, testing longstanding ties to Jewish allies

Cydney Wallace, a Black Jewish community activist, never felt compelled to travel to Israel, though "Next year in Jerusalem" was a constant refrain at her Chicago synagogue.

The 39-year-old said she had plenty to focus on at home, where she frequently gives talks on addressing anti-Black sentiment in the American Jewish community and dismantling white supremacy in the U.S.

"I know what I'm fighting for here," she said.

That all changed when she visited Israel and the West Bank at the invitation of a Palestinian American community organizer from Chicago's south side, along with two dozen other Black Americans and Muslim, Jewish and Christian faith leaders.

The trip, which began Sept. 26, enhanced Wallace's understanding of the struggles of Palestinians living in the

West Bank under Israeli military occupation. But, horrifyingly, it was cut short by the unprecedented Oct. 7 attacks on Israel by Hamas militants. In Israel's ensuing bombardment of the Gaza Strip, shocking images of destruction and death seen around the world have mobilized activists in the U.S. and elsewhere.

Wallace, and a growing number of Black Americans, see the Palestinian struggle in the West Bank and Gaza reflected in their own fight for racial equality and civil rights. The recent rise of protest movements against police brutality in the U.S., where structural racism plagues nearly every facet of life, has connected Black and Palestinian activists under a common cause.

But that kinship sometimes strains the more than century-long alliance between Black and Jewish activists. From Black American groups that

denounced the U.S. backing of Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory to Black protesters demonstrating for the Palestinians' right to self-determination, some Jewish Americans are concerned that support could escalate the threat of antisemitism and weaken Jewish Black ties fortified during the Civil Rights Movement.

"We are concerned, as a community, about what we feel is a lack of understanding of what Israel is about and how deeply Oct. 7 has affected us," said Bob Kaplan, executive director of The Center for Shared Society at the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York.

"Antisemitism has to be seen as a reprehensible form of hate ... as any form of hate is," he said. "Antisemitism is as real to the American Jewish community, and causes as much trauma and fear and upset to the American Jewish community, as racism causes to the Black com-

munity, or anti-Asian feeling causes to the Asian community, or anti-Muslim feeling causes in the Muslim community."

But, he added, many Jews in the U.S. understand that Black Americans can have an affinity for the Palestinian cause that doesn't conflict with their regard for Israel.

According to a poll earlier this month from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, Black adults were more likely than white and Hispanic adults to say the U.S. is too supportive of Israel—44% compared to 30% and 28%, respectively. However, Black Americans weren't any more likely than others to say the U.S. is not supportive enough of the Palestinians.

Generational divides also emerged, with younger Americans more likely to say the U.S. is too supportive of Israel, according to the poll. Even within the Jewish American community, some younger and other progressive Jews tend to be more critical of some of Israel's policies. (AP)

# Asia

## N. Korea fires long-range ballistic missile into sea

**SEOUL, South Korea (AP)**—North Korea fired an intercontinental ballistic missile into the sea Monday in a resumption of its high-profile weapons testing activities, its neighbors said, as the North vows strong responses against U.S. and South Korean moves to boost their nuclear deterrence plans.

South Korea's military said in a statement that the North Korean missile flew about 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) before landing in the waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan. It said the missile was launched on an elevated angle, an apparent attempt to avoid neighboring countries.

The statement called the launch "a grave provocation" that threatens international peace. It also noted the launch violated U.N. Security Council resolutions that ban any ballistic missile activities by North Korea.

Japan's Defense Ministry said it also spotted a ballistic missile launch by North Korea. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida told reporters that he had so far received no report of injuries or damages from the missile launch and that he planned to hold a National Security Council meeting to discuss the test.

The launch, the North's first

ICBM test-flight in about five months, was its second weapons firing in less than a day. On Sunday night, the North launched a short-range ballistic missile, also into the water off its east coast, according to South Korean, Japanese and U.S. governments.

South Korea's military said the short-range missile flew about 570 kilometers (354 miles) before landing in the waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan. The range is enough to reach key sites in South Korea, including U.S. military installations there.

The U.S. military said the launch highlighted "the destabilizing impact of (North Korea's) illicit weapons program."

Observers said the North's back-to-back launches were likely a protest against the moves by South Korea and the United States to bolster their joint nuclear deterrence capabilities in the face of North Korea's evolving nuclear threats.

Senior U.S. and South Korean officials met in Washington on Friday for their second Nuclear Consultative Group meeting. They agreed to update their nuclear deterrence and contingency strategies and incorporate nuclear operation scenarios in their combined military exercises next summer, ac-

cording to Seoul officials.

The consultative body is responsible for sharing information on nuclear and strategic weapons operation plans and joint operations, though the U.S. will retain operational control of its nuclear weapons.

U.S. officials said the group's establishment and other steps to solidify U.S. security commitment were meant to ease South Korean worries about North Korean provocations while keeping Seoul from pursuing its own nuclear program.

The "U.S. side reiterated that any nuclear attack by (North Korea) against (South Korea) will be met with a swift, overwhelming, and decisive response," said a joint statement issued after Friday's meeting.

On Sunday, North Korea's Defense Ministry slammed its rivals' move to include nuclear operation scenarios in their joint drills, describing it as an open threat to potentially use nuclear weapons against the North.

"The armed forces of (North Korea) will thoroughly neutralize the U.S. and its vassal forces' attempt to ignite a nuclear war," the North Korean statement said. "Any attempt by the hostile forces to use armed force against (North Korea) will face a preemptive and deadly counteraction."

## China defends bounties offered for Hong Kong dissidents abroad

**BEIJING (AP)**—China on Friday defended controversial bounties offered for the capture of Hong Kong dissidents who have fled abroad that have been heavily criticized by foreign governments and human rights groups.

Rewards of 1 million Hong Kong dollars (\$128,000) have been offered for information leading to the capture of 13 opposition figures accused of violating the semi-autonomous Chinese city's sweeping National Security Law.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said China rejected the outside criticism, saying the arrest orders were "necessary and justified and ... in line with international law and practice."

Without directly mentioning the bounties, Mao said other countries also have extraterritorial aspects to their laws on national security, adding that foreign governments' support for those on the list was merely cover for their aim of destabilizing Hong Kong, an Asian financial center that was roiled by 2019 anti-government protests.

"We strongly oppose and deplore the individual countries slandering Hong Kong's national security law and interfering in the judicial system," Mao told reporters at a daily briefing.

A day earlier, Hong Kong police accused another five overseas-based activists of violating the National Security Law imposed by Beijing, and offered rewards for their arrests.

Mao said the five "endangered national security by destabilizing Hong Kong under the guise of democracy and human rights."

One of the five, Joey Siu, is a United States citizen who was born in North Carolina and moved to Hong Kong as a child.

"This morning I, a U.S. citizen, woke up to the news that an arrest warrant & a HKD \$1 million bounty have been placed on my head by the Hong Kong govt. for exercising my freedoms in my own country," Siu posted on the social media site X, formerly known as Twitter.

"More to say later but for now: I will never be silenced, I will never back down," Siu

wrote. The police notice listed her alleged crimes as "colluding with a foreign nation or overseas forces to endanger national security."

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a statement dated Friday that Hong Kong authorities displayed their "disregard for international norms and human rights in Hong Kong."

"We strongly oppose any efforts to intimidate and silence individuals who choose to make the United States their home and will not waver in standing up for those who are targeted simply for exercising their human rights," he said.

The Hong Kong government in response said that the measures taken were "in line with the international practice," and said no country should "harbour criminals nor exonerate these people with different excuses."

The bounties further intensify the Hong Kong government's crackdown on dissidents following the 2019 demonstration that grew increasingly violent and were harshly suppressed by police.

# World

AS WAR WITH RUSSIA GRINDS ON

## A gloomy mood hangs over Ukraine's soldiers



Ukrainian soldiers practice on a tank during military training, in Ukraine, Wednesday, Dec. 6, 2023. AP

**KYIV, Ukraine (AP)**—A gloomy mood hangs over Ukraine's soldiers nearly two years after Russia invaded their country.

Despite a disappointing counteroffensive this summer and signs of wavering financial support from allies, Ukrainian soldiers say they remain fiercely determined to win. But as winter approaches, they worry that Russia is better equipped for battle and are frustrated about being on the defensive again in a grueling war. Some doubt the judgment of their leaders.

Discontent among Ukrainian soldiers—once extremely rare and expressed only in private—is now more common and out in the open.

In the southern city of Kherson, where Ukraine is staging attacks against well-armed Russian troops

on the other side of the Dnieper River, soldiers are asking why these difficult amphibious operations were not launched months ago in warmer weather.

"I don't understand," said a commander of the 11th National Guard Brigade's anti-drone unit who is known on the battlefield as Boxer. "Now it's harder and colder."

"It's not just my feeling, many units share it," said Boxer, who spoke on condition that only his battlefield name would be used.

Russia, which illegally annexed the Crimean Peninsula in 2014, controls about one-fifth of Ukraine. After 22 months of war the two countries are essentially in a stalemate along the 1,000 kilometer-long (620 mile-long) front line.

Russian forces aim to push

deeper into eastern Ukraine this winter, analysts say, so that Russian President Vladimir Putin can cite this momentum as he campaigns for reelection, an outcome that is all but certain. Emboldened by recent gains on the battlefield, Putin said last week that he remains fully committed to the war and criticized Ukraine for "sacrificing" troops to demonstrate success to Western sponsors.

In the United States, which has already spent some \$111 billion defending Ukraine, President Joe Biden is advocating for an additional \$50 billion in aid. But Republican lawmakers are balking at more support—just as some lawmakers in Europe are on the fence about providing another \$50 billion to Ukraine, after failing to deliver on promised ammunition.

## Israel faces new calls for truce after killing of hostages

**DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP)**—Israel's government faced calls for a ceasefire from some of its closest European allies on Sunday after a series of shootings, including the mistaken killing of three Israeli hostages, fueled global concerns about the conduct of the 10-week-old war in Gaza.

Israeli protesters are urging their government to renew negotiations with Gaza's Hamas rulers, whom Israel has vowed to destroy. Israel is also expected to face pressure to scale back major combat operations when U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin

visits Monday. Washington is expressing growing unease with civilian casualties even as it provides vital military and diplomatic support.

The war has flattened large parts of northern Gaza, killed thousands of civilians and driven most of the population to the southern part of the besieged territory, where many are in crowded shelters and tent camps. Some 1.9 million Palestinians—about 90% of Gaza's population—have fled their homes.

They survive off a trickle of humanitarian aid. Dozens of desperate Palestinians surrounded aid trucks after they

drove in through the Rafah crossing with Egypt, forcing some to stop before climbing aboard, pulling down boxes and carrying them off. Other trucks appeared to be guarded by masked people carrying sticks.

Israel said aid passed directly from Israel into Gaza for the first time Sunday, with 79 trucks entering from Kerem Shalom, where around 500 trucks entered daily before the war. Another 120 trucks entered via Rafah along with six trucks carrying fuel or cooking gas, said Wael Abu Omar, Palestinian Crossings Authority spokesman.

## Overdrive

## Chevy Tahoe/Suburban: More tech, more screen, more engine choices



GENERAL MOTORS  
The 2025 Chevrolet Suburban High Country.



Interior of the 2025 Chevrolet Suburban High Country. GENERAL MOTORS

By HENRY PAYNE  
The Detroit News

For its 12th generation in 2021, the Chevy Suburban (and sister Tahoe) mega-SUV went to the gym. In a complete body makeover, the pickup truck-based twins shed 300 pounds, gained 10 inches of length, an off-road Z71 model, and acres of interior room thanks to a space-saving independent rear suspension.

For their mid-product cycle update for 2025, the buff SUVs have loaded up on tech.

Slip into the Suburban/Tahoe and the driver's cabin has been transformed with big, double instrument and infotainment screens stretching across the dash similar to their Silverado and Silverado EV stablemates. The infotainment screen is angled towards the driver (shades of the mid-engine Corvette) for better access to Google Built-In, an elegant interface similar to your smartphone. Icons can

be moved around the screen, and the navigation app is familiar to anyone with a phone.

The longest-running badge in the industry (since 1935), the Suburban—along with shorter-wheelbase Tahoe—has long dominated the large-ute segment along with its GMC Yukon and Cadillac Escalade siblings. But this decade has brought competition beyond its traditional Ford Expedition rival. The Jeep Wagoneer and Grand Wagoneer cannonballed into the SUV pool in 2023 and Toyota has also upgraded its Sequoia offering based on an all-new Tundra pickup foundation.

Despite those new entries, Tahoe/Suburban own 40% of segment sales, but the pressure to maintain that lead—especially in a profit-rich segment at a time when electric vehicle investment is sucking cash—is urgent.

Thanks to its sheer size and crucial 2021 IRS update, Suburban's cargo space is massive, with a 20-cubic-foot advantage over the Wagoneer with their third rows folded. But the Chevy interior upgrades will address criticism that the models lagged behind. "The interior styling and materials are hohum," shrugged Car and Driver of the outgoing Tahoe/Suburban. No more.

The tech-tastic Suburban-Tahoe upgrades also shore up the SUVs' standard safety systems, long a soft spot in GM's lineup. Where the last-gen mega-utes didn't make adaptive cruise control standard until its top-rung High Country model, ACC and blind-spot assist are now part of a suite of standard safety offerings including emergency braking, interior occupant detection and rear camera alert. Optional goodies include a 15-inch head-up display and auto, hands-free power liftgate that activates when you round the rear corner.

With the increased standard features, expect the starting price of the \$56k Tahoe and \$59k Suburban to rise for '25. Pricing will be

announced when they hit dealerships late next year.

GM has been a leader in semi-autonomous transit with its hands-free Super Cruise driver-assist feature. The 2025 Tahoe and Suburban option it beginning with the LT trim so you can relax during long trips on divided highways.

Some 20% of Tahoe/Suburban buyers opt for the Z71 package with its standard all-wheel-drive, rugged looks, raises height, 33-inch all-terrain tires, and underbody skidplates. Chevy rewards those customers with another engine option for 2025 in addition to the 6.2-liter V-8—a stump-pulling, 3.0-liter, inline-6 cylinder diesel with 460 pound-feet of torque and a sippy 24 mpg to assist buyers who want to load 8,000-plus pounds of, say, all-terrain vehicles on a trailer.

The diesel is part of a robust lineup of gas engines that carries over from 2024 models and includes a base 5.3-liter V-8 making 355 horsepower and 383 pound-feet of torque and the aforementioned 6.2-liter boasting 420 horsepower/460 torque. All engines are operated via a 10-speed automatic transmission.

High Country models come with more blingtastic options like 24-inch wheels, air-suspension (so that the big elephant will kneel to help you gain entry) and magnetic ride shocks. The latter trickles down to the RST and ZR71 models.

You'll know the new Tahoe/Suburban by its mid-fascia-mounted headlights, a design detail increasingly common in the industry. The new headlight position allows for less glare when the elephant stomps into the rear-view mirror of a smaller car—but also more flexibility for designers on surrounding LED running lights. All six Tahoe/Suburban trims—LS, LT, RST, Z71, Premier and High Country—get their own unique fascia.

The mega-utes are built at GM's Arlington Assembly plant in Texas.



Interior of the 2025 Chevrolet Tahoe Z71. GENERAL MOTORS

New electronic goodies include a Connected Camera feature so you can monitor the vehicle for security breaches and an internal radar that tracks if anyone has been left in the car. Some three-row vehicles like Hyundai's Palisade connect their third row to the front passengers with a microphone, but the Chevy twins do not offer that feature.

Ergonomically, Chevrolets receive high marks and third-row access is easy with collapsing second-row seats. The middle row also benefits from a sliding center console that brings, say, cupholders closer to rear-seat passengers.

The 2025 refresh also gains from Chevy's experience with its off-road Z71 trim, which—following market trends—outdoors-focused consumers snapped up in large numbers.



The 2025 Chevrolet Tahoe RST. GENERAL MOTORS

# Life & Style

## Judge finds British tabloid hacked Prince Harry's phone

**LONDON** (AP)—Prince Harry's phone was hacked by journalists and private investigators working for the Daily Mirror who invaded his privacy by snooping on him unlawfully, a judge ruled Friday, delivering an historic victory for the estranged royal who broke from family tradition to take on the British press.

Phone hacking was "widespread and habitual" at Mirror Group Newspapers, and executives at the papers covered it up, Justice Timothy Fancourt said in his 386-page ruling handed down in the High Court.

The newspapers were ordered to pay the Duke of Sussex 140,000 pounds (\$180,000) for using unlawful information gathering in 15 of the 33 newspaper articles examined at trial.

Harry said the ruling was "vindicating and affirming" and should serve as a warning to other news media that used similar practices, an overt reference to two tabloid publishers that face upcoming trials in lawsuits that make nearly identical allegations.

"Today is a great day for truth, as well as accountability," Harry said in a statement read by his lawyer outside court. "I've been told that slaying dragons will get you burned. But in light of today's victory and the importance of doing what is needed for a free and honest press, it is a worthwhile price to pay. The mission continues."

Fancourt awarded the duke damages for the distress he suffered and a further sum to "reflect the particular hurt and sense of outrage" because two directors at Trinity Mirror knew about the activity and didn't stop it.

"They turned a blind eye to



Prince Harry leaves the High Court after giving evidence in London, on June 7, 2023.

what was going on and positively concealed it," Fancourt said. "Had the illegal conduct been stopped, the misuse of the duke's private information would have ended much sooner."

Harry, 39, the alienated younger son of King Charles III, had sought 440,000 pounds (\$560,000) as part of a crusade against the British media that bucked his family's longstanding aversion to litigation and made him the first senior member of the royal family to testify in court in over a century.

His appearance in the witness box over two days in June created a spectacle as he lobbed allegations that Mirror Group had employed journalists who eavesdropped on voicemails and hired private investigators to use deception and unlawful means to learn about him, other family members and associates.

"I believe that phone hacking was at an industrial scale across at least three of the pa-

pers at the time," Harry asserted in the High Court. "That is beyond any doubt."

But Harry had little proof of his own to back his allegations.

The Mirror's lawyer showed him examples of stories that mirrored those published previously in competing papers and even stories that had come from Buckingham Palace and, in one instance, a story from an interview the prince himself had given to mark his 18th birthday.

Harry repeatedly insisted there was no way the papers could have landed their scoops legitimately.

The judge said Harry had a tendency in his testimony "to assume that everything published was the product of voice-mail interception because phone hacking was rife within Mirror Group at the time."

Fancourt said Mirror Group was "not responsible for all of the unlawful activity directed at the duke" by the press, but

found it had eavesdropped on his messages as early as 2003 and when hacking was "extensive" at the newspapers from 2006 to 2011.

Mirror Group welcomed the judgment for providing the "necessary clarity to move forward from events that took place many years ago," Chief Executive Jim Mullen said.

"Where historical wrongdoing took place, we apologize unreservedly, have taken full responsibility and paid appropriate compensation," Mullen said in statement.

Attorney Philippa Dempster, who wasn't involved in the case, said hundreds of people who had articles written about them decades ago that contained private information from questionable sources may now be inspired to bring a claim against the newspapers.

"This is a landmark victory for the privacy rights of individuals and marks another

clear line in the sand for press standards," Dempster said. "It shows that the courts are willing to reach back into the past, sift through evidence and hold those who practiced the so-called 'dark arts' of the press to account."

The case is the first of three lawsuits Harry has filed against the tabloids over allegations of phone hacking or some form of unlawful information gathering. They form the front line of attack in what he says is his life's mission to reform the media.

Harry's beef with the news media runs deep and is cited throughout his memoir, "Spare." He blames paparazzi for causing the car crash that killed his mother, Princess Diana, and he said intrusions by journalists led him and his wife, Meghan, to leave royal life for the U.S. in 2020.

Harry alleged that Mirror Group used unlawful means to produce nearly 150 stories on his early life between 1996 and 2010, including his romances, injuries and alleged drug use. The reporting caused great distress, he said in sometimes emotional testimony, but was hard to prove because the newspapers destroyed records.

Of the 33 articles at the center of the trial, Mirror denied using unlawful reporting methods for 28 and made no admissions concerning the remaining five.

Fancourt previously tossed out Harry's hacking claims against the publisher of The Sun. He is allowing Harry and actor Hugh Grant, who has made similar claims, to proceed to trial on allegations that News Group Newspapers journalists used other unlawful methods to snoop on them.

Another judge recently gave Harry the go-ahead to take a similar case to trial against the publisher of the Daily Mail, rejecting the newspaper's efforts to throw out the lawsuit. Harry is joined in that litigation by Elton John, actors Elizabeth Hurley, Sadie Frost and others.

Attorney Michael Gardner, who was not involved in the case, said the judgment will get the attention of other publishers facing trial, particularly after the judge called out higher-ups who were aware of the unlawful activity.

"Overall, the media organizations that Harry is still suing will be worried that this will give him a lift and strengthen his determination to pursue them," Gardner said. "To the extent that Harry's other cases could implicate individuals at other media groups, then clearly there will be concerns there."

Phone hacking by British newspapers dates back more than two decades to a time when unethical journalists used an unsophisticated method of phoning the numbers of royals, celebrities, politicians and sports stars and, when prompted to leave a message, punched in default passcodes to eavesdrop on voicemails.

The practice erupted into a full-blown scandal in 2011 when Rupert Murdoch's News of the World was revealed to have intercepted messages of a murdered girl, relatives of deceased British soldiers and victims of a bombing. Murdoch closed the paper.

Newspapers were later found to have used more intrusive means such as phone tapping, home bugging and obtaining flight information and medical records.

## Friends' hearing issues lead to awkward outings

**DEAR ABBY:** We live in a retirement community. Many of our friends have hearing loss that ranges from slight to profound. While most of them have the money to travel the globe, they don't invest in hearing aids, which confounds us.

In restaurants, they keep bending their ears toward us and saying "Eh?" to just about every word. We are careful to enunciate clearly for their benefit, but it doesn't help much. Our natural inclination is to speak louder, which has embarrassed us several times as other diners grew quiet and turned to look at us.

On the most recent occasion, I brought a little notebook and pen in my purse, and when I wrote out a couple of responses, the wife looked offended. It didn't feel comfortable, but I thought it would be better than yelling or avoiding conversation altogether.

We find ourselves declining invitations with them more often in favor of electronic communication. These are delightful people otherwise. We're just not sure how to handle this. Do you have any suggestions?

WORKING EARS IN FLORIDA

**DEAR WORKING EARS:** Yes, I do. Tell these people privately that they may need to get their hearing checked because you are having to shout when you go out in public. Hearing loss happens to many seniors, and those who

have the problem can find themselves increasingly isolated. This is why it's so important to consult an audiologist when you start noticing a need to raise the volume on the television, or you often have to ask people to repeat what they have said to you.

■ ■ ■

**DEAR ABBY:** My son and his fiancée are getting married next month. They're calling it an elopement, but although they have been telling everyone when and where the wedding is, they are not formally inviting anyone. I have come to terms with that. I realize the day is about them, not me. However, this is my only child, and I have always dreamed about being part of this milestone in his life.

I'm sure this is his fiancée's choice and he is just going along with what she wants, but it is hurting me terribly to not be there. They have also decided a reception in their honor will be held six months afterward. Who does this? Is this proper etiquette?

BROKEN-HEARTED MOTHER

**DEAR MOTHER:** The rigid rules of etiquette have loosened considerably in recent years. Many younger people prefer the casual over the formal. Please don't lay the sole blame on your soon-to-be daughter-in-law without first discussing this with your son, because you may be shocked to learn this nontraditional wedding is happening

## DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



with his enthusiastic blessing. If that's the case, quietly let go of your "dream."

As to not being with your son on this special day, if you haven't received a formal invitation, **SHOW UP WITH A SMILE ANYWAY** and offer your services as a witness. Those who attend the wedding should be invited to the reception, and if they attend the reception, they should come with a gift in hand.

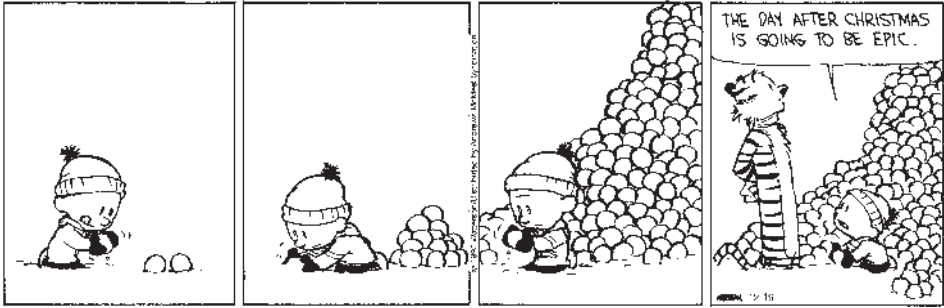
■ ■ ■

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

# Pastimes

## Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



## Garfield®

By Jim Davis



## Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



## The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



## CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS**

1 Incubator noise  
5 Fan's cry  
8 Scat queen  
12 Thus  
13 Flamenco cheer  
14 13, to Cato  
15 Hiker's snack  
17 Harrow rival  
18 Nine-digit ID  
19 Non-dairy milk variety  
20 Potpourri aroma  
21 Heavy weight  
22 Actor Ferrigno  
23 Snug  
26 Nudges roughly  
30 "Understood"  
31 Kenny G's instrument  
32 Yard tool  
33 Chinese leader

**DOWN**

1 Favorites  
2 Messes up  
3 Novelist Jennifer  
4 Luau  
5 Kieran's role on "Succession"  
6 Landed  
7 Bewitch  
8 Will VIP  
9 Low-calorie  
10 King of the jungle  
11 "— She Sweet"  
16 Booty  
20 "Help!"

**35** Nepal's neighbor  
**36** "Adorbs!"  
**37** Prom rental  
**38** "Swell!"  
**41** Poetic contraction  
**42** Rap sheet abbr.  
**45** Actor El-Masry  
**46** Spellbind  
**48** Conn of "Grease"  
**49** Gopher Ernie  
**50** Give a hoot  
**51** "Roots" author Haley  
**52** Sailor's assent

**53** Annoys  
**54** Hit sci-fi film with Keanu Reeves  
**55** Bagel topper  
**56** Bit of advice  
**57** Leb. neighbor  
**58** "My word!"  
**59** Cookie holder  
**60** Science room  
**61** Scrape (out)  
**62** Filming site  
**63** Stitch  
**64** — Jima  
**65** Rotate  
**66** Rib  
**67** Zilch  
**68** Actor Jannings  
**69** Staffer  
**70** Paris airport  
**71** Off in the distance  
**72** "Star Trek" captain  
**73** Chopping tools  
**74** Chai, e.g.  
**75** Biol. or chem.

**Solution time: 22 mins.**

**Yesterday's answer 12-19**

## CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:

Mo'Nique, 56; Gary Dourdan, 57; Jermaine Jackson, 69; Bess Armstrong, 70.

**Happy Birthday:** Choose to take responsibility for your happiness, and get your facts straight before you share your thoughts. Pay attention to what others expect or require before committing to something time-consuming or costly. Don't let change dictate your next move. Do what makes you happy, and don't let anyone make you feel guilty about following your heart or your dreams. Your numbers are 8, 14, 19, 24, 32, 36, 45.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** Show discipline when spending and handling contractual or medical issues. Knowing and doing what's best for you and following through will make a difference. Be open to suggestions, learning and accepting last-minute changes. You will reach your goal. ★★★★★

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Take charge, and don't stop until you are happy with the results. When in doubt, ask an expert and learn as you go. Your success depends on how astute you are and your ability to admit when you are wrong or come up short. ★★★

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Too many choices will confuse you. The balance between work and home needs fine-tuning if you intend to keep the peace and get things done on time. Know when to say no to demands, and you'll ward off an emotional setback. Address responsibilities first. ★★★

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** Pay attention; you'll see what's brewing before it becomes a problem. Too much too fast will lead to a costly miscalculation. A steady pace forward coupled

with surrounding yourself with experts will put your mind at ease and encourage hands-on action. ★★★

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Head in a direction that excites you instead of letting someone dictate your next move. An energetic approach to something that brings you joy will encourage you to develop skills that lead to a higher income or worthwhile connections. Put your energy where it counts. ★★★★★

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Be careful when you're dealing with others. Emotions and anger will surface if you make changes that threaten someone's security. Consider what's important to loved ones, and compensate to ensure no one gets left behind. A considerate change with an explanation will pay off. ★★

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** Be realistic when dealing with changes at home or in your family dynamics. Getting along will help you gain perspective regarding your purpose and effectiveness. Don't overstep your boundaries or fall short on your contributions. Don't make excuses; do your part and finish what you start. ★★★

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** Look for an opportunity, and you will discover the lifestyle that suits your needs. Put more thought into how you can exploit what you enjoy doing most. Don't wait for someone to step in and take over. Personal gain, growth and self-improvement are favored. ★★★

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Do what you can. Refuse to bend to limits set by others. Do what feels right and what's best for you. An energetic approach to your responsibilities will influence how others think of you and your contributions. ★★★

## EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

COPYRIGHT 2007  
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** Put your emotions to rest and deal with financial and business matters using common sense. Put your cash where it makes a difference instead of letting it burn a hole in your pocket. Pay down debt, implement efficient home improvements and cap your festive spending. ★★★

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Don't feel you must keep up with the neighbors or get involved in something that doesn't interest you because someone else does. Consider your options and do what's best for you. Don't jeopardize your health and well-being to please others. Tidy up loose ends. ★★★★★

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** Pay attention to your cash flow. Emotional spending will put you in debt. Be aware of subscriptions, scams and other hidden costs that can make you vulnerable. An attitude change toward saving will ease your mind and help lower debt. ★★  
**Birthday Baby:** You are innovative, disciplined and opportunity-driven. You are influential and cooperative.

★: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ★★: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ★★★: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ★★★★★: Aim high; start new projects. ★★★★★: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

## SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

7	2			9			6	
6	8	3		5		7	9	4
		9		6	7	8	2	
1		8						7
			6	8	4			2
3		2				9		6
2	9					6		8
				6				1
	6	5	7		2		3	9

Difficulty: ★★

12/19

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

9	8	3	7	2	5	6	4	1
1	5	6	8	4	3	9	7	2
7	4	2	9	6	1	8	5	3
4	6	9	2	8	7	3	1	5
5	3	7	1	9	4	2	6	8
8	2	1	3	5	6	7	9	4
3	7	5	6	1	2	4	8	9
6	9	4	5	3	8	1	2	7
2	1	8	4	7	9	5	3	6

Difficulty: ★

12/18

## WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

**HOW TO PLAY:** All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

ONLINE GAMBLING

Solution: 9 letters

B R L E L B A T N U O C C A A  
W L E A L R E G U L A T E D G  
C I A F W O E R U C E S D V A  
R O N U F S G A M E A I I E M  
E B M N T O N I S A C S S R B  
D O E P I R L O N T I Y H T L  
I N J T U N I E I T A E A I E  
T U O C S T G V T T B N R S R  
P S I M A G E S D A O O E E S  
U L N P O K E R C N M M K D T  
N O I A N J K C E D U I O D R  
G T N I E W A G E R A O N R O  
I S G D K R C D R O W S S A P  
S R E Y A L P T C E L L O C S  
K E T T E L U O R O L L I V E

©2023 Andrews McMeel Syndication www.wonderword.com 12/19  
Account, Addictive, Advertised, Animate, Baccarat, Bets, Bonus, Card, Cash, Casino, Collect, Computer, Credit, Deck, Gamblers, Game, Images, Joining, Keno, Laws, Live, Log In, Money, Offer, Paid, Password, Players, Poker, Promotions, Regulated, Roll, Roulette, Secure, Share, Sign Up, Slots, Sound, Sports, Table, Virtual, Visit, Wager, Winnings  
Yesterday's Answer: Crystal  
To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 66 through 76, order on line at www.WonderWordBooks.com. In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367.

## STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

# Cook, Bills dominate on ground, end Cowboys' 5-game win streak



## ORCHARD PARK, N.Y.

(AP)—James Cook had a career-best 179 yards rushing and scored twice as Buffalo dominated on the ground, and the Bills beat Dallas 31-10 on Sunday, ending the Cowboys' five-game winning streak.

Josh Allen threw for just 94 yards for the Bills (8-6), who won consecutive games for the first time since a three-game winning streak ended on Oct. 1. Buffalo gained ground in the AFC playoff race, moving one game ahead of Denver and Pittsburgh.

The Cowboys (10-4) clinched their third playoff berth before kickoff thanks to other results around the league. But Dallas fell a game behind NFC-best San Francisco.

The Cowboys, who are 7-0 at home, dropped to 3-4 on the road, where they've been outscored 156-152.

Buffalo rushed for 266 yards, held the ball for 10 minutes more than Dallas and had 28 first downs to the Cowboys' 14.

The Cowboys were held to a season-low 195 yards of offense. Dak Prescott finished 21 of 34 for 134 yards with an interception.

## RAVENS 23, JAGUARS 7 JACKSONVILLE, Fla.

(AP)—Lamar Jackson threw a touchdown pass and made the play of night when he avoided a sack and threw to Isaiah Likely near the goal line, and Baltimore beat Jacksonville to clinch a playoff berth.

Gus Edwards ran for a touchdown for the Ravens (11-3), who won their fourth in a row and moved a step closer to securing the No. 1 seed and home-field advantage throughout the AFC playoffs. Jackson threw for 171 yards—70 of those to Likely—and ran for 97 more.

The Jaguars (8-6) lost their third straight—all against AFC North teams—and fell into a tie with Houston and Indianapolis atop the AFC South.

Trevor Lawrence fumbled twice, including one in the fourth quarter that essentially sealed Baltimore's eighth victory in its last nine games.

The Ravens lost promising rookie running back Keaton Mitchell to a left knee injury early in the fourth quarter.

## BROWNS 20, BEARS 17 CLEVELAND

(AP)—Joe Flacco passed for 374 yards and led Cleveland to 13 points in the fourth quarter, including Dustin Hopkins' go-ahead 34-yard field goal with 32 seconds left, and the Browns withstood a Hail Mary on the final play to beat Chicago.



Buffalo Bills running back James Cook (4) scores a touchdown against the Dallas Cowboys during the fourth quarter of an NFL football game, Sunday, Dec. 17, 2023, in Orchard Park, N.Y.

Flacco was intercepted three times but made some brilliant throws in the closing minutes to rally the Browns, including a 51-yard touchdown pass to Amari Cooper with 3:08 left that tied it at 17-all.

The Browns (9-5) got the ball back with 1:50 left and the 38-year-old Flacco, who was signed on Nov. 20 and made his third start for Cleveland, completed two passes to tight end David Njoku for 65 yards to set up Hopkins' kick.

After blowing a 17-7, fourth-quarter lead, the Bears (5-9) nearly pulled off a stunning finish.

Justin Fields lofted a pass from the 45-yard line to the end zone on the game's last play. The ball was deflected toward Bears receiver Darnell Mooney, who was lying on his back, but it bounced off his hands and Cleveland's D'Anthony Bell made the interception.

## TEXANS 19, TITANS 16, OT NASHVILLE, Tenn.

(AP)—Ka'imi Fairbairn kicked a 54-yard field goal as time expired in overtime, and Houston rallied from a 13-point deficit without C.J. Stroud to beat Tennessee.

The Texans (8-6) entered the day one spot outside of the AFC's seven-team playoff field. They kept pace by winning without several key players, including Stroud—their standout rookie quarterback—and top receiver Nico Collins, right tackle George Fant and a pair of defensive starters.

Case Keenum made his first start since Week 17 of the 2021

season for Cleveland. Keenum threw for 229 yards and helped Houston outgain the Titans 340-204. Devin Singletary ran for 121 yards.

Titans rookie quarterback Will Levis left with 1:49 left in overtime after being sacked for the seventh time with his left leg caught underneath him in a pile. Tennessee (5-9) clinched a second consecutive losing season.

## 49ERS 45, CARDINALS 29 GLENDALE, Ariz.

(AP)—San Francisco clinched its second straight NFC West title, getting three touchdowns from Christian McCaffrey to beat Arizona for its sixth straight win.

Charvarius Ward had two interceptions, including a pick-6, for the 49ers (11-3). Brock Purdy went 16 of 25 for 242 yards and tied a career high with four touchdown passes.

The Niners have won each of their past six games by at least 12 points. They've also won 12 straight against NFC West opponents.

McCaffrey finished with five catches for 72 yards and two touchdowns while also running for 115 yards and a score.

Kyler Murray completed 26 of 39 passes for 211 yards, one touchdown and two interceptions for the Cardinals (3-11), who fell to 2-3 since he returned from an ACL tear.

## RAMS 28, COMMANDERS 20 INGLEWOOD, Calif.

(AP)—Matthew Stafford passed for 258 yards and hit Cooper Kupp and Demarcus

Robinson for touchdowns, leading Los Angeles past free-falling Washington.

Kupp's eight receptions for 111 yards were highlighted by a 62-yard TD catch right after halftime for the Rams (7-7), who have won four of five to push their way into the playoff picture.

Kyren Williams overcame the first two lost fumbles of his two-year NFL career to rush for 152 yards and a touchdown while his Rams slid into one of the three NFC wild-card playoff positions alongside New Orleans and Minnesota.

The Rams' defense largely shut down the Commanders (4-10) in the first three quarters before Washington backup quarterback Jacoby Brissett made things interesting.

Brissett relieved Sam Howell in the fourth quarter and immediately led two touchdown drives for the Commanders, who have lost five straight. Curtis Samuel caught two TD passes, including a 3-yard grab with 1:46 to play.

## BUCCANEERS 34, PACKERS 20 GREEN BAY, Wis.

(AP)—Baker Mayfield threw for 381 yards and four touchdowns, and Tampa Bay beat Green Bay for its third straight win.

Mayfield went 22 of 28 and threw touchdown passes to Mike Evans, Rachaad White, Ko Kieft and David Moore to help the Buccaneers (7-7) keep pace with New Orleans atop the NFC North. Mayfield's passer rating was a perfect 158.3.

Chris Godwin had 10 catches for 155 yards for the Bucs.

The Packers (6-8) lost their

second straight to deal their playoff hopes a major blow. Jordan Love was 29 of 39 for 284 yards with touchdown passes to Tucker Kraft and Jayden Reed.

## SAINTS 24, GIANTS 6 NEW ORLEANS

(AP)—Derek Carr passed for 218 yards and three touchdowns, and New Orleans sacked Tommy DeVito seven times in a win over New York.

Carr connected on 23 of 28 passes without a turnover in one of the more efficient outings of his first season with New Orleans (7-7). His scoring passes went for 7 yards to Keith Kirkwood, 24 to Juwan Johnson and 1 to Jimmy Graham, who caught his third scoring pass in three games.

The Saints remained tied atop the NFC South with Tampa Bay.

DeVito and the Giants (5-9) had their three-game winning streak snapped. They are guaranteed of a losing record and have only a slight chance of making the playoffs. DeVito was 20 of 34 for 177 yards.

## DOLPHINS 30, JETS 0 MIAMI GARDENS, Fla.

(AP)—Raheem Mostert scored two touchdowns to set Miami's single-season record with 20, Tua Tagovailoa threw for 224 yards and a score, and the Dolphins blanked New York without star receiver Tyreek Hill.

Mostert walked into the end zone untouched on a 2-yard run that put AFC East-leading Miami (10-4) ahead 7-0. His second TD was from 1 yard out and made it 24-0 late in the second quarter. He has 18 rushing

TDs and two receiving.

Tagovailoa was 21 of 24 and threw a 60-yard touchdown pass to Jaylen Waddle. He was replaced by Mike White with 8:32 remaining and the Dolphins up by 30.

Jets quarterback Zach Wilson left late in the second quarter with a concussion. New York (5-9) was shut out for the first time since losing 26-0 at Denver in Week 3 of the 2021 season. The Jets were eliminated from playoff contention for the 13th straight season.

## CHIEFS 27, PATRIOTS 17 FOXBOROUGH, Mass.

(AP)—Running back Jerick McKinnon threw for one touchdown and ran for another, and Patrick Mahomes passed for 305 yards and two scores to help Kansas City beat New England.

The Chiefs (9-5) snapped a two-game skid and maintained control of the AFC West race. With Taylor Swift again on hand to cheer him on, Travis Kelce caught five passes for 28 yards, but also had a potential touchdown bounce off his hands.

Bailey Zappe, making his third straight start in place of the benched Mac Jones, completed 23 of 31 passes for 180 yards for the Patriots. New England (3-11) lost for the sixth time in seven games and remains in contention for one of the top two picks in next year's NFL draft.

In what could be the penultimate home game of coach Bill Belichick's tenure, the six-time Super Bowl champions took a 10-7 lead before allowing 20 straight points.

## PANTHERS 9, FALCONS 7 CHARLOTTE, N.C.

(AP)—Eddy Pineiro kicked a 23-yard field goal as time expired, and Carolina dealt Atlanta's playoff hopes a huge blow in a game played in a steady downpour.

The Falcons (6-8) entered the game tied with New Orleans and Tampa Bay for first place in the NFC South, but now need help to get into the postseason after the Saints and Buccaneers both won.

Bryce Young threw for 167 yards in his second NFL win and Chuba Hubbard ran for 87 yards for Carolina (2-12), which snapped a six-game skid.

The Falcons led 7-6 when Desmond Ridder threw into traffic and was intercepted at the Carolina 5 by safety Xavier Woods. Young, who had struggled all afternoon, led the Panthers on a 17-play, 90-yard drive that took all 7:35 off the clock.

Ridder finished 12 of 22 for 152 yards with one touchdown and the one pick.

# Giannis breaks Kareem Bucks' career rebounding record in victory over Rockets



**MILWAUKEE** (AP)—Giannis Antetokounmpo had 26 points and 17 rebounds, breaking Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's Milwaukee rebounding record, and Damian Lillard scored 39 points in the Bucks' 128-119 victory over the Houston Rockets on Sunday night.

Antetokounmpo's highest rebounding total of the season allowed him to pass Abdul-Jabbar after he had already moved past the Hall of Famer for the team scoring record. Antetokounmpo broke Abdul-Jabbar's record with a rebound of Tari Eason's missed shot with 7:46 left in the fourth quarter. It was his 14th rebound of the game and gave him 17,162 in 11 seasons with Milwaukee.

Antetokounmpo also is the Bucks' career leader in assists, joining Michael Jordan (Chicago), LeBron James (Cleveland) and Kevin Garnett (Minnesota) as the only players to lead a franchise in all three categories.

The Bucks are 1907. They won their 13th straight home



Milwaukee Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo drives to the basket against Houston Rockets' Jabari Smith Jr. during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, Dec. 17, 2023, in Milwaukee.

game and improved to 14-1 at home while snapping the Rockets' five-game winning streak.

Fred VanVleet led the Rockets with 22 points. Dillon

Brooks was ejected after picking up two technical fouls with 38.9 seconds left, and Rockets coach Ime Udoka also was whistled for two technicals after

coming out on the court.

**PELICANS 146, SPURS 110**  
SAN ANTONIO (AP)—CJ

## Golden State stands by Draymond Green, say he'll get help during his indefinite suspension

**LOS ANGELES** (AP)—The Golden State Warriors believe Draymond Green needs serious help to stop the increasingly frequent outbursts in his long history of unsportsmanlike behavior.

Coach Steve Kerr and general manager Mike Dunleavy Jr. are hopeful Green's indefinite suspension for hitting Phoenix center Jusuf Nurkic in the face will provide the time and motivation for their star forward to make real progress on the mental and emotional challenges that led him to this grim point in a decorated career.

"To me, this is about more than basketball," Kerr said Thursday night before the Warriors' 121-113 loss to the Clippers. "It's about helping Draymond. I think it's an opportunity for Draymond to step away and to make a change in his approach, in his life, and that's not an easy thing to do."

Dunleavy and Kerr both said the team is satisfied with the NBA's latest punishment for Green, the four-time NBA champion who was indefinitely banned Wednesday. The suspension was the sixth of Green's career and his fourth in 2023.

"He can't do what he's been doing, and he knows that," said Stephen Curry, Green's teammate for 13 seasons and four championships. "Everybody has their mountains to climb, and Draymond's are his, and I'm confident that he can get over the hump, however long it takes for him to get there."

Dunleavy repeatedly said the Warriors will "help" Green during his absence, but didn't specify the nature of that aid. Kerr said Green will get counseling from professionals outside the team to identify the reasons behind his escalating series of physical outbursts, including his decision to punch then-teammate Jordan Poole during training camp in October 2022—an act for which the Warriors fined Green, but didn't suspend him.

"The whole key for me is what this can do for his life long-term," Kerr said. "I want him to be happy. I want him to reap the rewards of an incredible career and legacy, and I want him to finish that career in a really wonderful, dignified manner. This guy is one of the great winners of all time, one of the great competitors of all time, but he's crossed a line. He knows that. He knows he needs help, and he's going to get that help, and we're going to help him with it."

Green will be around the Warriors extensively during his suspension, although he can't be with the team on game nights. Although Green didn't travel to Los Angeles, Dunleavy said the Warriors are "not jettisoning the guy off somewhere."

"I think this is something that a lot of people may see as a problem, but we're looking to turn it into a positive," Dunleavy said on the UCLA campus during the Warriors' morning shoot-around. "(Green is at) a point in his career and his life where we

want to get some things straightened out, and maybe sometimes you need a jolt like that."

Dunleavy also unambiguously confirmed the Warriors are committed to the 33-year-old Green, who is in the first season of a four-year, \$100 million contract extension. Although Dunleavy pointedly said Golden State's starting lineup hasn't played well enough during the team's 10-13 start, he praised the play of Curry and Green.

"He's been here for a long time," Dunleavy said of Green. "He's hung a ton of banners and means so much to this organization. I think this is about turning this thing into a positive and getting better. I think that happens, and we feel really good. Like I said, his play has been terrific. It's just his lack of availability that's not been great, and we want to make that better."

Dunleavy said Green and the Warriors had discussions with the NBA about the nature of the suspension before it was announced this week, and all parties agreed on a truly indefinite suspension. Dunleavy said there are no guaranteed parameters on the ban's length.

Dunleavy also said he thinks it's reasonable to hold Green to a higher standard after his history of misbehavior, including the bizarre headlock he placed on Minnesota's Rudy Gobert during a skirmish last month, leading to a five-game ban.

"I hope Draymond gets the help he needs," Phoenix star Kevin Durant, Green's former Golden State teammate, said

after the suspension was handed down Wednesday. "I know Draymond. He hasn't been that way when I was around him and coming into the league. Hopefully he gets the help he needs and gets back on the court and puts all this stuff behind him."

The Warriors have dropped 12 of 16 after losing to the surging Clippers, and Dunleavy indicated the team's next 15 to 20 games will play a major role in deciding whether Golden State needs to make big roster changes for a team that has won four championships in the past nine seasons.

In the current NBA standings, not only would Golden State not be in the playoffs, but the Warriors wouldn't even qualify for the play-in tournament.

Compounding Green's woes, the suspension almost certainly means he won't play in the 65 games usually required for a player to be eligible for postseason awards under the NBA's new participation policies, which means his annual spot on the all-defensive team is in jeopardy. And it surely will be part of what USA Basketball takes into consideration when deciding whether Green, a two-time Olympic gold medalist, deserves a spot on the team that will go to next year's Paris Games.

Kerr will coach that Olympic team, and Green has indicated he would like to play. Speaking in his role as a TNT analyst earlier this week, Grant Hill—USA Basketball's managing director—said Green striking Jurkic was "disappointing."

"He's got to use better judgment in that situation," Hill said.

McCollum scored 29 points, Brandon Ingram added 26 and New Orleans set a franchise record with 22 3-pointers in rolling past Victor Wembanyama and San Antonio.

Wembanyama had 17 points and 13 rebounds in front of former San Antonio All-Star Tony Parker, his childhood idol in France and later mentor. Wembanyama's eighth consecutive double-double surpassed the previous NBA record by a teenager of seven straight set by Dwight Howard with Orlando in 2005.

The Spurs unveiled a Hall of Fame designation on Parker's retired jersey during a half-time ceremony. Parker was inducted in August with San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich and former Spurs assistant Becky Hammon, along with Pau Gasol, Dwyane Wade and Dirk Nowitzki.

**CELTICS 114, MAGIC 97**  
BOSTON (AP)—Jaylen Brown scored 17 of his 31 points in the fourth quarter and Boston beat Orlando to improve to 14-0 at home.

Boston is off to its second-best start at home, behind the 1957-58 club that opened with 17 straight wins. The Celtics

have won five straight overall to improve to 20-5, a half-game ahead of Minnesota for the NBA lead.

Jayson Tatum added 23 points, Kristaps Porzingis had 15 points and 10 rebounds, and Jrue Holiday scored 14 points for Boston.

Paolo Banchero had 36 points and 10 rebounds for Orlando.

## WARRIORS 118, TRAIL BLAZERS 114

**PORTLAND, Ore.** (AP)—Klay Thompson scored 28 points on a night Stephen Curry's NBA-record 3-pointer streak ended at 268 games and Golden State held off Portland for its second straight victory.

Curry was 0 for 8 from 3-point range, 2 for 12 overall and scored seven points. He began the streak Dec. 1, 2018, at Detroit.

Andrew Wiggins, who was recently taken out of the Golden State's starting lineup, had 25 points and seven rebounds to help the Warriors win consecutive games for the first time since the end of a five-game winning streak in early November.

Jerami Grant led Portland with 30 points.

## SUNS 112, WIZARDS 108

**PHOENIX** (AP)—Devin Booker shook off a subpar shooting night, scoring 11 of his 27 points in the fourth quarter, and the Phoenix Suns overcame a 16-point deficit to beat the Washington Wizards 112-108 on Sunday night.

Kevin Durant led the Suns with 28 points, including a dunk on a three-point play in the final minute. Jusuf Nurkic had 17 rebounds. Booker also had eight assists.

Phoenix outscored Washington 31-19 in the fourth to snap a two-game losing streak and stay above .500 at 14-12.

Daniel Gafford had 26 points and 17 rebounds for the Wizards, who dropped to 4-21 in a failed bid to win consecutive games for the first time this season. Washington beat Indiana on Friday night after losing 15 of its previous 16 games.

## Suns' Bradley Beal leaves game with ankle injury

**PHOENIX** (AP)—Phoenix Suns guard Bradley Beal injured his right ankle during the first quarter of Friday night's game against the New York Knicks and won't return, according to the team.

It's another blow for the Suns' All-Star trio of Kevin Durant, Devin Booker and Beal, which has played together for just one other game this season, and that was in Wednesday night's loss to the Brooklyn Nets.

The 30-year-old Beal took a 3-point shot in the first quarter, which he made, but he landed on the foot of New York's Donte

DiVincenzo, who was called for a Flagrant 1 because he didn't allow Beal a space to land.

Beal was on the ground for a few minutes, writhing in pain. He eventually got up to make his free throw, but then went to the locker room.

The three-time All-Star was playing in just his sixth game this season. He has dealt with a sore back for much of the past two months. Durant and Booker have also missed time this season with various injuries.

Beal had six points against the Knicks before leaving with the injury.

# Glasnow traded to Dodgers from Rays after agreeing to \$136.5M, 5-year contract



**PHOENIX** (AP)—Once the initial shock wore off on the price tag of Shohei Ohtani's record-shattering \$700 million, 10-year deal with the Los Angeles Dodgers, details about the contract emerged that were nearly as stunning.

A total of \$680 million—97% of the money—was deferred until 2034-43 with no interest.

Had the Dodgers invented some kind of contract voodoo new to Major League Baseball?

Not really. But it appears to be a team-friendly deal that also has benefits for Ohtani as the Japanese superstar departs the Angels, heads 30 miles up Interstate 5 and establishes a new home with the Dodgers in Chavez Ravine.

"Thanks to his endorsements and other off-the-field revenue



Tampa Bay Rays starting pitcher Tyler Glasnow throws against the Texas Rangers during the first inning of Game 1 in an AL wild-card baseball playoff series game Oct. 3, 2023, in St. Petersburg, Fla.

streams, he has the luxury to defer compensation," said Michael Rueda, head of the U.S. division of sports and entertainment at Withers law firm. "But there's always some risk."

Part of Rueda's job is giving financial advice to high-profile sports stars and celebrities. He said the Ohtani-Dodgers deal looks like a solid arrangement, even if there are tradeoffs for both sides.

Make no mistake, the 29-year-old Ohtani is a rich man and will be rich long into the foreseeable future, but money promised later is never the same as money in hand.

One example of Ohtani's risk: Former Pittsburgh Penguins superstar Mario Lemieux was out about \$26 million in the 1990s when the franchise was in financial trouble and couldn't pay the money it owed the hockey legend in a deferred deal.

Things eventually worked out. Lemieux converted his deferred salary into equity with the team, then partnered with Ron Burkle to pull the club out of bankruptcy. They eventually made a windfall after selling part of their stake in 2021—but it's a reminder that financial circumstances can change when 20 years pass. The Dodgers were certainly a fan-drawing juggernaut in 2023, but 2043 doesn't come for a long time. LA, after all, is only 12 years removed from filing for bankruptcy protection itself under former owner Frank McCourt.

There's also at least some

risk for the franchise: The New York Mets famously deferred \$5.9 million that slugger Bobby Bonilla was owed in 2000 and—thanks to an 8% interest rate—will end up paying nearly \$30 million total in annual installments until 2035. The Mets have leaned into the self-own in recent seasons, with owner Steve Cohen celebrating the July 1 payment that Bonilla is due each year.

Of course, Ohtani's deferred pay comes with no interest. That's a potentially monstrous savings—we're talking billions—on a deal that could have been much more costly. Ohtani's deal with 8% interest would come out to nearly \$3 billion by 2043.

"It's interesting to me that the deferred money comes with no interest, from what I've read" Rueda said. "That's giving up a lot of money."

Ohtani's other potential advantage from the contract is he receives \$680 million of the \$700 million after he's done playing, which means he might not be living in California, where taxes are relatively high. Depending on where he lives from 2034-43, that could lead to sizable savings.

Rueda said the issue isn't black and white and there are lots of variables, particularly if he goes back to Japan.

"Tax is always a big part," Rueda said. "The concept of moving to a different jurisdiction and avoiding the California state tax—yeah, that could be accurate."

## EMMANUEL

From page 20

went down in just 56 seconds as he was shown no mercy by Jose Camacho. In another welterweight kickboxing match, GMT's Isaac Crisostomo pounded Trench Tech's E.J. "Prod" Nekaifes into a split decision win, 30-29, 28-29, and 30-27.

Up-and-coming fighter Mike "Shotgun" Camacho of Trench Tech put up a fiery lightweight kickboxing match against veteran fighter, GMT's John "Bones" Lee, and won in split decision, 27-25, 28-29, 29-28.

RM Sport's Mathew Moriano out-boxed MBC's Gren "Hitman" Cepeda in a lightweight boxing match and won via unanimous decision, 28-27, 30-27, and 30-27.

Trench Tech's Nosh Demapan unanimously won in a featherweight kickboxing bout against MCMMA/PRIMEVIL's Saips Thuy, 28-25, 30-27, 30-27.

In the bantamweight boxing match, RM Sport's Jerome Cariaga beat Latte Built's Josh Soccorro, 30-28, 25-24, and 28-28; in another boxing matchup in the same weight class, Trench Tech's Mametto Iakopo mauled MBC's Glaine "Saipan Mauler" Cepeda, 25-28, 29-28, and 30-29; MCMMA/PRIMEVIL's Justin Agulto kickboxed his way to a second-round win against Jimmy "Crazy Ray" Polk; Trench Tech's Audiscott Iakopo won unanimously over independent fighter Leo Tenorio, 29-24, 30-26, and 30-27; and in the first bantamweight kickboxing bout, Trench Tech's C.J. Hofschneider knocked down Team Undisputed's Jay "Tabi" Muna in 2:32.

In the atom weight division, Dillan Pomdi knocked

out Trench Tech's Keith "The Rowdy Rebel" Aldan at 1:56 in Round 2; Dre "Drizzy" Aldan won via split decision against Javen Montenegro, 28-25, 29-28, and 29-29; Trench Tech's Vicente "Bengbeng the Dengdeng" Palacios gunned down MCMMA/PRIMEVIL's Gunzy Tomei; independent fighter Angelo Pulido kickboxed his way to win against Phil "PrimeTime" Gregorio; and GMT's Knighty Soulik went pound for pound and won in unanimous decision against MBC's Edryan "The Sniper" Bayot.

And in the flyweight division, GMC's Patterson Joseph won unanimously over Latte Built's Salvatore "The Tiger" Gotti, 30-29, 30-28, 29-28.

After the main event between Trench Tech's Andres "Tanapag Beach Bad Boy" Camacho and GMT's Jake Albert that went into the wee hours of Sunday, organizer Justis "Cuki" Alvarez said the long-awaited return of fight night in the Marianas was a success.

"It was a long night, it was a long couple of months of preparation, but it all paid off in the end. I'm just so happy that we finally were able to bring back combat sports to the Northern Mariana Islands. It's been too long," said Alvarez.

He said after Super Typhoon Yutu in 2018 and COVID-19, the timing wasn't right to bring it back. But now, the timing was "right. Everybody had a very merry Christmas and I told everybody we're gonna end the year with a bang, and that's exactly what we did."

As for the fights, Alvarez said all the fighters were itching and were ready to rumble as seen with their aggressiveness out of the starting gate. Overall, Alvarez said, he's "super happy with

their performance. All the kids fought well. They fought their hearts out and they gave it their all and they put on a show for all the fans in attendance."

With that, the attendance of over 600 was not a surprise to Alvarez. "Although I'm super

impressed with the turnout, I'm not surprised because it's a long time coming and fans just gravitated..."

He then thanked the sponsors IT&E, Miller Lite, Heineken, Hafa Adai Rent-A-Car, and Century Hotel.



LEIGH GASES

Ring of Fire organizer Justis "Cuki" Alvarez says his thanks to the crowd of over 600 during an intermission of the matches last Saturday at the Garapan Central Park Roundhouse.



LEIGH GASES

Stanley "The Raging Bull" Iakopo, left, sizes up his opponent, Sam "The Tank" Emmanuel during their co-main event bout of the Ring of Fire event early Sunday morning at the Garapan Central Park Roundhouse.



LEIGH GASES

Light heavy weight kickboxing contender Bon Sagana of Latte Built throws a punch against opponent Guam's Jeremiah "J-Comp" Taitingfong in the Ring of Fire event last Saturday at the Garapan Central Park Roundhouse.

## LEGENDS

From page 20

and balances throughout with a back-and-forth scoring of points, but the Legends had it locked in the fourth. Dick Tibayan and Jun Tabora shifted the momentum towards their side as they found their stride in the crucial last minutes of the game.

They took turns at the basket and brought the Legends out of the four-point hole and in turn dug the Guardians into their own 4-point hole. Tabora led the Legends with 18, while nephew Jimboy put up 12 of his own, and Tibayan made do with 10.

The Guardians' Diaz and

Erwin Lumanlan had 14 markers each, and Manuel Gatbonton contributed eight.

The other game that night was a blowout win by Alliana's, 80-65, over Bourbon Bar & Cafe.

In the makeup game of Maplas and Jonny's Bar & Grill last Friday, Jonny's crew stirred the pot just right and won in another 66-45 blowout.

**Legends 58** — Ju, Tabora 18, Ji, Tabora 12, Tibayan 10, Ege 8, Montano 4, Rosario 2, Discartin 2, Zapata 2.

**Guardians 54** — Diaz 14, Lumanlan 14, Gatbonton 8, Godoy 6, Directo 5, George 3, Peredo 2, Hermosa 2.

**Scoring by quarters:** 12-9, 22-21, 37-41, 58-54.

## PIRATES

From page 20

Delos Santos, Pete Tomokane, and Eric Palacios.

Three more runs came in the second inning by way of Derek Sasamoto, Sablan, and Delos Santos, plus one more in the third for an 8-0 lead.

The Pirates ran away with runs they looted from Dodgers pitching staff Greg Magofna

and Clint Quitugua. They added four more in the bag in the last inning as Sasamoto, Ben Tagabuel, Delos Santos, and Tomokane made it 12-1, which was more than enough to seal the deal for their fourth win.

In the standings after the Pirates are the Reds with a 2-1 record; Blue Jays are at an even 2-2; the Marlins are 1-3; and the Spartans have yet to win with three losses.



Cook, Bills dominate on ground, end Cowboys' 5-game win streak.

PAGE 17

# Saipan Tribune Sports

Glasnow traded to Dodgers from Rays after agreeing to \$136.5M, 5-year contract.

PAGE 19



20 TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2023

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

## Emmanuel KOs Iakopo in ROF co-main event



LEIGH GASES  
Guam's Sam "The Tank" Emmanuel corners Trench Tech's Stanley "The Raging Bull" Iakopo on the ropes during their co-main event fight in the Ring of Fire at the Garapan Central Park Roundhouse early Sunday morning.

By LEIGH GASES  
leigh\_gases@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The penultimate co-event fight of the successful Ring of Fire boxing and kickboxing event starring veteran Stanley "Raging Bull" Iakopo vs. Guam Muay Thai's Sam "Tank" Emmanuel ended in the second-round win via a TKO by the latter.



Iakopo held his ground in the first round as he let out a flurry of fast and furious punches that were taken pretty

well by the younger Emmanuel. The first round was well fought by both as they didn't seem to break too much of a sweat. However, Emmanuel didn't hold back in the second round as Iakopo quickly gassed out



LEIGH GASES  
Mauler Boxing Club's Jamaal "The Animal" Mresbang is introduced alongside his coach, former professional boxer, Miguel Arrozal, second right, before his boxing match in the Ring of Fire at the Garapan Central Park Roundhouse last Saturday night.

with each lackluster punch he threw. Holding on to Emmanuel for support and to catch his

breath, Iakopo tried to regain strength, but after a combo by Emmanuel, Iakopo went down

before the second round ended. Clearly dazed, Iakopo's corner conceded and the match was called and the referee handed the TKO victory to Emmanuel.

There were 21 fights—with the main event reported on Monday. The following are the results of the rest of the fights before the co and main event.

GMT's Jeremiah "J-Comp" Taitingfong battered and bruised Latte Built's Bon Sagana in the light heavyweight kickboxing bout, 30-23, 30-26, and 30-27.

In the middleweight kickboxing bout, independent fighter Antwon Indalecio knocked out independent fighter Jonel Enriquez 2:15 into the fight.

An electric up-and-coming boxer, Jamaal "The Animal" Mresbang from the Mauler Boxing Club, won unanimously versus Trench Tech's "Korean Blood" Ram Lee, 29-27, 30-26, and 30-27.

In the welterweight kickboxing match, Nelson Saimon

See EMMANUEL on Page 19

## Legends stand ground against Guardians, 58-54

By LEIGH GASES  
leigh\_gases@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER



The Legends brought the Guardians to their knees, in a nail-biting 58-54 game, in the continuation of the Pacific Saipan Inc. Promo Invitational Basketball League last Thursday at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

It's an ongoing family affair for the Taboras as shots

fired from the uncle-nephew duo helped the Legends stay on top.

The Guardians didn't let their guard down that easily throughout the game though as they kept pace and came within one point at the end of the second quarter 21-22.

Rodmar Diaz's 8 points and clutch plays, steered the Guardians to a 41-37 lead at the end of the third quarter as the game shifted in their favor.

It was a battle of checks See LEGENDS on Page 19



LEIGH GASES  
Legends' Jimboy Tabora goes for a reverse layup during their game against the Guardians in the Pacific Saipan Inc. Promo Invitational Basketball League last Thursday at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

## Pirates only undefeated team in SBL Masters League

By LEIGH GASES  
leigh\_gases@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER



The Pirates plundered their way to an undefeated season

so far after their most recent conquest of the Dodgers last Thursday in the 2023 Tan Holdings-SBL Masters League at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field.

After their 12-1 win against the Dodgers, the Pirates are at



LEIGH GASES  
In this file photo, a Marlins fielder misses the ball as he applies the tag against a Spartans runner during a game in the 2023 Tan Holdings-SBL Masters League at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Baseball Field.

a league leading, 4-0, while the Dodgers are in the middle of the pack with a 2-2 record.

It was a run-mercy ruled game played in just five innings after an underwhelming performance by the Dodgers, with a stark contrast by the Pirates.

The Dodgers' only run—and blemish by Pirates pitcher Pete Sablan—was made in the fourth inning after Eddie Manibusan scored off an RBI single by Glenn Camacho.

The Pirates' offense was golden throughout as they brought in the bounty early with a four-run first inning that scored leadoff batter Vinnie Sablan, Jerome See PIRATES on Page 19